

UNDERSTANDING
GOD
EXISTENCE
RELIGION
&
PURPOSE OF LIFE

by



Intention + Ability + Knowledge + Honesty - Arrogance
=
TRUTH

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Chapter 1:

Our Mission

Uniting through Truth & Wisdom

- Misunderstandings about God and religion lead to ignorance, deviation and rejection.
- Religious division breeds hatred, partiality, injustice, persecution and violence.
- Power-driven leaders exploit religion for personal gain.
- Most of the Believers are unable to cultivate the real benefits of their belief in God and religion due to unawareness of the true concept of God and religion.

What we do:

- We discourage apostasy and atheism by clarifying the concept of God and religion with correct meaning and context of religious texts which seem to be scientifically or logically wrong due to incorrect interpretation.
- We promote a correct understanding of God and religion, dismantling divisive interpretations that fuel hate, conflicts and injustice.
- We empower individuals with knowledge, enabling them to critically evaluate religious perspectives to resist manipulation, and create a society where true understanding and wisdom prevails.
- **We highlight the transformative power of religion to foster unity, compassion, justice and peace, shaping a better world.**

Chapter 2:

The Fundamental Questions and My Journey towards Understanding

Born and raised in a so-called Muslim family (UP, India), I learnt that there is a Supreme Being, who is the creator and sustainer of everything in the universe. Later on I came to know that people call Him with different names (we will generally refer to Him as God in this book). It is also told that God has provided us with guidance. But then I found that there are so many disputes and conflicts in the name of religion, which often cause division, hate and discrimination in human society in the name of religion, and many times lead to injustice, violence and persecution. I came up with some fundamental questions related to God, Existence, Religion and Purpose of Life.

The Fundamental Questions

1. The Creator?

How are we certain that there is a Supreme Being behind the existence of the universe?

2. Purpose of Creation?

Why did God create us and everything else that exists?

Instead of delving into the vastness and complexity of all creation—The most important question I had is why God created us, human beings, as we are so unique due to our advanced intellect, moral reasoning, and ability to accumulate and develop knowledge across generations. We can manipulate and utilize other creations for our purposes, solve complex problems, and overcome confusion. This makes us feel as though we are the beneficiaries and caretakers of all creation.

3. Divine Communication/Revelation?

Can God really communicate with us? Are there divine scriptures having information and instruction directly from God?

4. Responsibility for the Religious Division in Human Society?

Who is responsible for the complications and problems that have arisen due to the conflicting ideas of religion in human society?

Either it is God who is faulty and responsible for these problems or the human beings.

5. The Cause of Tendency of People's Negative, Aggressive and Destructive Behaviour?

Human beings have a strong tendency to believe negative information about others, especially those they dislike, without verification or understanding the actual context. This habit is a major cause of misunderstandings and conflicts among people.

It seems as though people are always ready to derive negativity from situations based on their doubts and preconceived notions.

I believe this is a problem that almost everyone has faced at some point, making it one of the most destructive behaviors in human interactions. It is one of the greatest threats to humanity that has caused immense suffering, hardships and devastation throughout history.

What causes people to prefer negative thoughts, and develop such intense and destructive negativity, and takes them to an extreme level?

Is it God who has made human beings like this, if yes, then why?

My Journey towards Understanding:

I started my religious journey from basic rituals of religion, then found multiple religions, and different sects, with differences and conflicts among them in many aspects of religion, which made me think that there is something wrong which is causing this situation. That's how my journey starts towards understanding God and Religion, and it took me around 10 years to come to a conclusion since I couldn't get much time partly due to my occupation and partly due to my health issues.

With an open mind, I tried reading, listening and talking to so-called religious scholars who could never give satisfactory answers to my questions. I also faced harsh treatment and arrogance from religious scholars while raising such questions, and sometimes I was very close to facing violence, and I really don't know what could have happened to me if I did not stop to save myself. They would divert from the questions, and start showing rudeness, taunting and imposing allegations. Then I decided to go for self study through online resources. I spent much of my time deeply thinking over what I read or listened to.

Finally I found the answers to all my fundamental questions and the root cause of the problems. I decided to share my knowledge with everyone which I gained through a difficult journey, so that anyone can benefit from it without going through such a difficult journey and spending their valuable time.

Answer to these Questions:

It is the knowledge that enables us to come to the correct path, and it shapes our thoughts, actions, and purpose. **KNOWLEDGE** is compared with **LIGHT**. Life without knowledge has darkness (absence of understanding), and when it acquires knowledge, the darkness goes away. The intensity of light signifies the level of knowledge, and the clarity of our understanding depends on the level of knowledge, like the intensity of light determines clarity of view.

After a deep thought and scientific observations, we come to the conclusion that there is a Supreme Being behind the existence of this universe. We will discuss more about this in the coming chapter.

If God can create us, then He can certainly communicate with us. Hence He must have communicated with us and informed us the purpose of creation and our life in this world.

To find answers to other questions, we need to turn to what is actually claimed in the divine books – those received through direct revelation from God, as well as through divine inspiration. Our ability to resolve complex problems and overcome confusion can then be applied to analyze these texts and understand the root causes of religious conflicts and confusions.

We need to find out concepts of God, Religion, and Purpose of life as understood and followed by different groups who claim to believe in God and religion, and through the scriptures which are claimed to be divinely revealed or divinely inspired.

Before discussing the concept of God, religion, and purpose of life we will understand knowledge in more detail with a framework, and also have a look at the scientific explanation of the origin of the universe as per the current discoveries and theories of science.

It is crucial to remember that It is knowledge that resolves confusions and problems, but only if we honestly utilize the available knowledge with our wisdom and willingness to understand and resolve. And that's why I have named this mission "**The Honest and Wise**" meaning the one who honestly utilizes knowledge and wisdom to decide and choose the best of the options for the greatest benefit.

Chapter 3:

The Universe, Infinity, and God

Fundamental Building Blocks of the Universe

Force, energy, and particles are the fundamental building blocks and form the core framework for understanding our physical universe. Here is a break down why these three are essential:

Particles:

- Particles are the fundamental building blocks of matter. They can be elementary (like electrons or quarks) or composite (like protons or neutrons).
- Particles possess properties like mass, charge, spin, momentum and flavour.
- All particles exhibit wave-like properties.
- Particles can carry energy. For example, a fast-moving electron has kinetic energy.
- They are the "stuff" that makes up everything we see and interact with.

Energy:

- Energy is a fundamental property of systems, the capacity to do work or cause change.
- Energy can exist in various forms, such as kinetic, potential, thermal, electromagnetic, and nuclear.
- Einstein's formula $E=mc^2$ shows that mass itself is a form of energy.
- Energy is conserved, meaning it can be transformed but not created or destroyed.
- Every change in the universe, from the smallest subatomic event to the largest cosmic event, can be described as a result of interactions of fundamental particles or the exchange of energy. Particle interactions and energy exchanges are two sides of the same coin.

Forces:

- It is the fundamental forces that govern and mediate the interactions of the particles, and energy exchanges.
- The four fundamental forces (strong nuclear force, weak nuclear force, electromagnetic force, and gravitational force) dictate how particles attract, repel, and transform.
- It is the the fundamental forces behind:
 - Formation of protons and neutrons with quarks,
 - Then formation of nuclei with protons and neutrons,
 - Then formation of atoms with the nuclei and electrons,
 - Then formation of molecules with atoms,
 - Then formation of all the stuff in the universe, including all living and nonliving things.
- Even the lights and waves exist only due to these fundamental forces, meaning no one can see, hear or speak anything without these fundamental forces.
- Hence, whatever exists in the universe, including stars, planets, light, gases, air, water, heat, electric current, growth of plants and other living beings, is all because of these fundamental forces.
- Nothing in the universe, including all living and nonliving things, can exist or move without these forces.
- The fundamental forces are not just abstract concepts; they are the very rules that govern the universe at its most basic level.

- The precise accuracy with which fundamental forces operate is absolutely crucial for the universe's existence.

Space:

- Space is the three-dimensional extent in which objects and events occur.
- Space provides the context for particle interactions and force propagation.
- In the QFT model, space consists of quantum fields which are considered energy, spread throughout the space.

Existence of Time

The existence of space is conceivable and observable, but the *existence of time* as a concrete, tangible entity is fundamentally inconceivable. Time is an artifact of our current understanding, rather than a fundamental reality. This is a profound idea with roots in both philosophy and modern physics. Let's explore some scientific aspects and theories of time:

Absence of Direct Observation: We can't observe time itself, we can only see changes in objects and events, but not the underlying "flow" of time.

Abstract Nature: Time is more of a concept or measurement tool than a physical object. We use it to quantify change, and to understand sequences of events.

Quantum Mechanics: At the quantum level, time is often treated as a parameter, rather than an observable quantity. Many theories of quantum gravity eliminate time from their base equations.

Brain's Construction: Our perception of time's flow is largely a construct of our brains, not a direct observation of an external entity. In this view, time is not a fundamental ingredient of reality but rather a byproduct of the universe's evolution.

For example, we can say how long the sun is from earth in terms of space, as there is a specific distance between earth and the sun in space. But we can't say how long the sun is from earth, as there is no specific time between earth and the sun.

For a photon (packet of light) it takes just around 8 minutes to travel from the sun to earth, which means the time between the sun and earth is 8 mins for a photon, while other entities will experience different times. Hence, time is nothing, but an abstract idea to understand sequences of events and the gap between the two events, which is subjective—it will be different for different kinds of entities.

Journey from the Origin of Universe to the Evolution of Human Beings

1. **Big Bang:** The universe begins as an incredibly hot, dense state of energy. As it expands and cools...
2. **Elementary Particles Form:** Energy condenses into fundamental particles: quarks, leptons, and force-carrying bosons.
3. **Protons and Neutrons Arise:** Quarks combine via the strong force to form protons and neutrons.
4. **First Nuclei (Big Bang Nucleosynthesis):** In the early universe, protons and neutrons fuse to form light atomic nuclei like hydrogen and helium.
5. **Stars and Heavier Elements:** Gravity pulls hydrogen and helium together to form stars. Nuclear fusion within stars creates heavier elements (carbon, oxygen, etc.). Massive stars explode (supernovae), scattering these elements into space.

6. **Planetary Systems Form:** Gravity causes clouds of gas and dust (containing heavier elements) to collapse, forming stars and orbiting planets.
7. **Simple Molecules Emerge:** On planets like early Earth, energy sources and chemical reactions lead to the formation of simple organic molecules.
8. **Self-Replication and Early Life:** Through complex processes, self-replicating molecules arise, marking the beginnings of life.
9. **Evolution and Complexity:** Over billions of years, life evolves through natural selection, becoming increasingly complex, leading to single-celled organisms, then multicellular life.
10. **Vertebrates and Mammals:** Evolution continues, leading to the development of vertebrates, then mammals.
11. **Primates and Hominids:** Within mammals, primates evolve, eventually leading to hominins – the ancestors of humans.
12. **Homo Sapiens:** Over a relatively short geological time scale, hominids evolve into *Homo sapiens*, characterized by complex brains, language, and tool use.
13. **Individual Human Being:** A single human being develops from a fertilized egg, guided by the genetic information encoded in DNA, built from atoms formed in stars billions of years ago, all originating from the energy of the Big Bang.

Evolution of Life

1. **Early Earth (~4.5 billion years ago):** Primarily **iron (Fe)**, **oxygen (O)**, **silicon (Si)**, **magnesium (Mg)**, forming the planet. Atmosphere mainly **carbon dioxide (CO₂)**, **methane (CH₄)**, **water vapor (H₂O)**, **ammonia (NH₃)**, and **nitrogen (N₂)**, with little to no free **oxygen (O₂)**.
2. **Simple Molecules:** Energy (lightning, UV radiation) drives reactions between elements in the early atmosphere and oceans, forming simple organic molecules containing **carbon (C)**, **hydrogen (H)**, **oxygen (O)**, and **nitrogen (N)** (e.g., amino acids, nucleotides, sugars).
3. **Self-Replication:** Complex organic molecules, likely involving **carbon (C)**, **hydrogen (H)**, **oxygen (O)**, **nitrogen (N)**, and **phosphorus (P)** (in nucleic acids), develop the ability to self-replicate.
4. **First Cells (Prokaryotes):** Membranes composed of lipids (containing **carbon**, **hydrogen**, and **oxygen**, sometimes with **phosphorus**) enclose self-replicating molecules and other organic compounds. Key elements within the cell include **carbon**, **hydrogen**, **oxygen**, **nitrogen**, **phosphorus**, **sulfur (S)**, and trace amounts of metals like **iron (Fe)** for enzymes.
5. **Photosynthesis:** Early photosynthetic cells (cyanobacteria) use **carbon dioxide (CO₂)** and water (**H₂O**) with sunlight to produce organic matter and release **oxygen (O₂)**. Key elements include **carbon**, **hydrogen**, **oxygen**, **nitrogen**, **magnesium (Mg)** (in chlorophyll), and **iron (Fe)**.
6. **Complex Cells (Eukaryotes):** Endosymbiosis leads to more complex cells with organelles. Elemental composition remains similar to prokaryotes but with increased structural complexity involving **calcium (Ca)** and other elements.
7. **Multicellularity:** Groups of eukaryotic cells cooperate, leading to diverse multicellular organisms with specialized tissues and organs. The range of elements used expands depending on the organism's specific needs (e.g., **calcium (Ca)** for shells and bones in some animals).
8. **Animals and Vertebrates:** Animals evolve diverse body plans, utilizing elements like **calcium (Ca)** for skeletons, **iron (Fe)** in blood (hemoglobin), and **phosphorus (P)** in bones and energy transfer.
9. **Mammals and Primates:** Mammalian and primate evolution continues the trend of complex biochemistry relying on the core elements **C, H, O, N, P, S** and a range of minerals like **sodium (Na)**, **potassium (K)**, **calcium (Ca)**, **magnesium (Mg)**, **iron (Fe)**, **zinc (Zn)**, and trace elements for various physiological functions.
10. **Hominids and Homo Sapiens:** The evolution of humans builds upon this foundation, with a sophisticated biochemistry requiring a balanced intake of all essential elements, including the macronutrients (**C, H, O, N**) and micronutrients (minerals and trace elements) for maintaining complex biological processes, nerve function, bone structure, and overall health.

Genes (DNA) and the Core Functions of Our Body

Our body's functions, at their core, are orchestrated by our **genes (DNA)**:

1. **Genetic Blueprint (DNA):** Genes, made of DNA, contain the instructions for building and operating our bodies. They hold the code for producing proteins.
2. **Protein Production:** Genes are transcribed into RNA, which is then translated into proteins. **Proteins are the workhorses of the body**, performing a vast array of functions:
 - **Structural:** Forming tissues (collagen), hair (keratin).
 - **Enzymatic:** Catalyzing biochemical reactions (digestion, metabolism).
 - **Signaling:** Hormones and receptors mediating communication.
 - **Transport:** Carrying molecules (hemoglobin for oxygen).
 - **Defense:** Antibodies fighting infections.
 - **Movement:** Muscle proteins (actin and myosin).
3. **Cellular Functions:** Genes dictate the types and amounts of proteins produced in each cell, determining its specific structure, function, and behavior (e.g., nerve cell vs. muscle cell).
4. **Development and Growth:** Genes control the intricate processes of embryonic development, growth from childhood to adulthood, and the differentiation of cells into specialized tissues and organs.
5. **Metabolism and Energy:** Genes encode enzymes that regulate metabolic pathways, converting food into energy and building necessary molecules.
6. **Nervous System:** Genes guide the development and function of the nervous system, enabling communication via nerve impulses and neurotransmitters (which are often proteins or derived from gene products).
7. **Immune System:** Genes provide the instructions for the diverse components of the immune system, allowing the body to recognize and fight off pathogens.
8. **Senses:** Genes play a role in the development and function of our sensory organs and the proteins involved in detecting stimuli (light, sound, chemicals, etc.).
9. **Inheritance:** Genes are passed down from parents to offspring, determining many of our physical traits and influencing our predisposition to certain conditions.

In essence, our genes provide the fundamental instructions that dictate the production of proteins, which in turn carry out virtually all the functions necessary for life, from the smallest cellular processes to the complex operations of our entire body. The environment can influence how these genes are expressed, but the underlying instructions reside within our DNA.

Origin of Universe and the Concept of Infinity

While we have made significant progress in understanding the evolution of the universe, the question of how force and energy came into existence remains a profound mystery in science and philosophy.

Stating there was nothing before this universe goes against the logic that something cannot come out of nothing. Without the concept of infinity, it is impossible to explain the existence of the universe.

- The idea of infinity possesses immense conceptual strength. It's a fundamental concept that stretches the limits of human comprehension.
- The *idea* of infinity is very powerful, inescapable, and cannot be easily dismissed. **We can conceive of it, even if we struggle to fully grasp it.**
- It is also a necessary part of mathematics, and other methods of describing the universe.

- **Challenges to Physical Reality:** Since physics cannot explain the infinity, it often arises as problems in theories, indicating that those theories are incomplete. The planck scale, which is a very important concept in theoretical physics representing a boundary where our current understanding of physics breaks down, is an example of a physical limit.
- **Irreducibility:** The concept of infinity is, in a sense, irreducible. We cannot break it down into simpler components. It stands as a fundamental concept that we must grapple with.
- **It is important to acknowledge the limitations of human ability to physically prove or fully comprehend infinity, as infinity, by its very nature, cannot be completely explained or demonstrated.**

Impossibility of Something from Nothing

No present and future discoveries and theories can prove that something can come from nothing. This a very strong conviction about the impossibility of something coming from nothing. Here is why this statement resonates and what it implies:

- **The Principle of Conservation:**
 - It aligns with the fundamental principle of conservation of energy and mass.
 - These principles state that energy and mass cannot be created or destroyed, only transformed.
 - This principle is a cornerstone of our understanding of physics.
- **Logical Impossibility:**
 - From a purely logical standpoint, "nothing" is defined as the absence of everything.
 - Therefore, it's difficult to conceive how something could arise from a state of absolute non-existence.
 - Philosophically, this aligns with the concept of contingency, where the universe and everything within it appear to be contingent – they exist, but they don't have to.
 - This contingency suggests the need for a necessary being, something that must exist and whose existence doesn't depend on anything else, to be the ultimate ground of reality.
- **Cosmological Implications:**
 - It challenges some interpretations of the Big Bang theory, which, at first glance, might seem to suggest that the universe arose from "nothing."
 - However, modern cosmology attempts to address this by proposing:
 - **Quantum fluctuations:** Where the universe arose from a quantum fluctuation of a pre-existing field, not from absolute nothingness.
 - **Inflationary theory:** Where the universe rapidly expanded from a very small, dense state, but that state existed.
 - Therefore, modern cosmology does not state that the universe came from absolutely nothing.
- **The Limits of Science:**
 - Science is based on empirical observation and experimentation.
 - Therefore, it's inherently limited in its ability to address questions about absolute origins.
 - Science can describe how the universe evolved, but it may never be able to fully explain why it exists in the first place.

Theory of Divine Origin of Existence

Let's analyze the scenario: a fundamental, infinite source of energy and force that justifies the existence of the universe.

- **A Fundamental Source:**
The idea of a fundamental source addresses the question of ultimate origins. It avoids the problem of "something from nothing" by postulating a pre-existing source, from which everything has originated.
- **Infinity as a Necessary Attribute:**
Attributing infinity to this source provides several advantages:
 - It eliminates the need for a further explanation of the source's origin.
 - It provides an inexhaustible reservoir of energy, fundamental forces, and limitless potential.
 - It allows for the creation of something as vast as the universe.
- **Justification of Existence:**
 - By positing an infinite source, we can find a framework where the universe's existence becomes logically consistent.
 - The universe is then seen as a manifestation or expression of this fundamental source, which posits a transcendent source of reality.
 - This removes the need for a finite cause.
 - The attributes ascribed to this "infinite source" – source of fundamental and infinite energy and force, and limitless potential – resonate with basic understandings of God, who is described as the ultimate source of all power and existence.

In essence, this proposal offers a coherent and logically consistent explanation for the universe's existence, grounding it in an infinite, fundamental source of all existence.

In summary, the principle that 'something cannot come from nothing' is strongly supported by fundamental laws of physics and logic. Conversely, the notion that 'something can come from nothing' challenges these established principles, and it is inconceivable, therefore, it cannot not be an argument against the former principle.

Expecting empirical evidence of the existence of infinity is not an act of wisdom because of the limitation of human ability to physically prove or fully comprehend infinity, as infinity, by its very nature, cannot be completely explained or demonstrated. Hence, belief in the claim of existence of God is logically undeniable due to the concept of infinity in the origin of existence, while ignoring infinity would be an act of avoiding a logical conclusion.

Conclusion:

All the processes and reactions, including lighting and UV radiation, are caused and dictated by the fundamental forces. Without these forces nothing would happen at all.

The finely-tuned fundamental forces governing the universe and the breathtakingly complex genetic code within life point to an intelligent design of immense sophistication. The precise balance of forces allows for stars, planets, and life. The intricate information within DNA directs the assembly of life with astonishing precision. The interconnectedness of these realms suggests a carefully calibrated system, a purposeful existence hinting at an infinite power and wisdom far

beyond chance. It clearly hints that there existed an intention, ability and knowledge behind the creation of the universe and life.

Consciousness is an undeniable reality based on our conscious experience being tied to our physical being, even if the fundamental nature of consciousness remains a scientific mystery.

Where do the fundamental forces, energy, consciousness, and innate knowledge or ability come from?

This clearly indicates the presence of a fundamental power behind all existence—one with infinite creative potential, boundless energy and forces at its command, and limitless knowledge and wisdom—a power that is undoubtedly a conscious being with a purpose of creation.

This clearly indicates that there is a fundamental power behind the existence of everything, who has infinite potential of creation, with infinite resources of energy and forces, and infinite wisdom.

The Ultimate Reality—commonly referred to as God—is understood as the source of all forces, energy, consciousness, and knowledge. Without invoking this concept, the existence of the universe, fundamental forces, consciousness, and innate knowledge remains ultimately unexplained. In contrast, accepting the existence of God offers a complete and logical framework that accounts for all existence—leaving no essential questions unanswered.

Therefore, belief in the existence of God is a logically undeniable conclusion, and ignoring it would mean going against intellect, logic and reasoning.

The concept of God in religion will be covered in detail in the later section of this book.

Chapter 4:

Five Layers of Knowledge

What is Knowledge?

Knowledge is the awareness and understanding that shape our **thoughts, actions, and purpose**.

Awareness is about recognizing "**what**," while understanding is "**why**" and "**how**." You can be aware of something without understanding it, but you can't truly understand something without first being aware of it.

Knowledge is acquired through:

1. **Experience**– Knowledge gained through direct senses, like what we see, hear and feel.
2. **Information**– Knowledge of something that we have not experienced directly, but gained through other sources like books, teachings and ideas shared by others.
3. **Reasoning**– Reasoning is our ability to draw conclusions based on our analysis of experience and information using our intellect. It is partly instinctive but further refined over time. Each individual possesses a different level of reasoning ability, which depends on the use of intellect, exposure to experiences, and the accumulation of information. The more we engage in intellectual thinking, go through experiences, and gather information, the stronger our reasoning becomes.

Technically, reasoning is understanding **Mechanisms** (How), **Cause** of the mechanism (Why), and **Relationship** between different elements whether they are physical objects, ideas, or sequences of events. (Reasoning=MCR)

Those with Lack of Reasoning:

Those who do not actively use their intellect to evaluate and understand matters are similar to, or even worse than animals like sheep, monkeys, and donkeys. They either follow their limited instincts, and imitate others in their community and society, or simply move in the direction they are led.

The Five Layers of Knowledge

Let's understand the following **framework** which provides five layers of knowledge which we acquire for leading a righteous, meaningful, and peaceful life:

1. **Morality** (What makes us a good person)
2. **General Awareness of the World** (Understanding human society and civilization)
3. **Natural Science** (Understanding law of nature)
4. **Supreme God** (The supreme lord)
5. **Religion** (Divine Guidance)

1. Morality – What Makes Us a Righteous Person

- Morality is the Sense of Right and Wrong, Good and Evil, along with instinctive Empathy that guides human behavior, ensuring fairness, justice, and social harmony.
- It helps distinguish between good and evil (**honest-dishonest, kind-cruel, fair-unfair, just-unjust, useful-harmful**) actions and maintain social harmony.
- It is partly instinctive and partly influenced by society, culture, and experiences.

- Every person has an inherent sense of good and evil, as well as instinctive empathy, which helps in becoming a righteous person and making ethical decisions.
- Core moral principles like fairness, honesty, kindness, patience, respect, etc. are valued across all human societies but their application can differ. For instance, some cultures emphasize individual freedom, while others prioritize collective well-being. What is considered respectful in one culture might be seen as rude in another. What is considered as an immoral act in one culture, it is normal in another.

2. General Awareness of the World – Understanding Human Society and Civilization

This layer covers the essential knowledge required for navigating daily life. It includes:

- **Society and Institutions** – Social structures, laws, politics, governance, economy, different private and government institutions providing various services including education, healthcare, social welfare, and others.
- **History and Culture** – Historical events, cultural traditions and prominent figures that have shaped civilizations.
- **Geography and Environment** – Awareness of geography, climate, and natural resources.
- **Current Affairs** – Current events, societal and global challenges, ongoing developments.
- **Tools and Technologies** – Awareness and practical knowledge of common tools and technologies that enhance day-to-day work and societal progress.
- **Livelihood** – Exploring and learning different ways people earn and sustain their lives, including jobs, businesses, industries, farming, and financial systems.

3. Natural Science – Understanding Law of Nature

It is the systematic and comprehensive study of nature, beyond general awareness, that seeks to explain how everything in the universe exists and functions. It relies on observation, experimentation, and logical reasoning to uncover fundamental truths about the physical world. It helps in:

- **Expanding Human Knowledge** – Science helps us understand the laws of nature and their impact on our life. It explains natural phenomena, such as gravity, weather patterns, ecosystems, etc.
- **Discovery & Evolution** – Scientific knowledge evolves with new research and discoveries and theories are refined, corrected, or replaced as evidence emerges, ensuring progress over time.

Importance:

- **Technological Advancements** – Science drives the technological advancement that brings development of tools, machines, and systems that enhance productivity and bring convenience to daily life.
- **Medical Progress & Health Improvements** – Scientific research in medicine has led to vaccines, treatments, and surgical advancements that increase life expectancy and enhance well-being.
- **Managing Natural Resources** – Science helps us use and conserve natural resources efficiently, promoting sustainable energy, agriculture, and environmental protection.

Key point: *Science explains the physical world but does not provide answers about morality and ultimate purpose of life. Also, science cannot address subjective experiences, values, and the "why" behind existence.*

4. God - The Supreme Lord

- Morality based on personal or societal judgment can be subjective and situational. Individual moods, circumstances, and personal biases can influence moral decisions, which make morality potentially inconsistent. But belief in God reinforces morality and introduces the concept of **divine surveillance, where actions, thoughts, and speech are constantly observed**.
- The belief in divine surveillance **strengthens moral commitment**, even in situations where there's no earthly authority or social pressure, cultivating true righteousness in human beings.
- It fosters an internal **sense of accountability** that extends beyond immediate rewards or punishments, which encourages ethical behavior **even when no one is watching**.
- Morality solely based on human instincts mainly focuses on living ethically within society, but belief in God adds the idea that there is **purpose of our existence**, and our actions have a higher meaning and impact beyond just social order.

5. Religion - Divine Guidance

- Religion basically affirms and mandates morality, clarifies the purpose of life for an individual, and also provides details of other **rules, ritual and spiritual practices**.
- The **principal morality is the core of religion** and it remains the same forever, however, other rules, rituals and spiritual practices may change over time for different cultures and places.
- The **rituals and spiritual practices foster a connection with God**, cultivating inner peace and consistency of moral commitment, helping to maintain righteousness and a balance between fulfilling ultimate purpose and engaging in worldly affairs.

Summary:

Here is a summary of what we have learned from the above framework of knowledge:

The first 3 layers of knowledge:

- Are directly related to our survival in life. Some people may have less hardships and a better life experience comparatively, while others may have more hardships in life.
- In fact, the first two layers are not exclusive to humans— even animals and other living beings possess basic levels of this knowledge, enabling them to navigate and sustain their lives.
- These three layers equip us with the ability to:
 - Understand moral principles, relationships, and societal roles.
 - Take care of the well-being of ourselves and the environment
 - Earn a livelihood through jobs, businesses, or other means.
 - Expand our understanding of the physical world, solving problems, and enhancing our life experiences.
- However, these layers do not inherently impose restrictions on our actions and reactions, leaving us vulnerable to influences like: ignorance, desire, ego, anger, jealousy, and the urge for revenge.

The 4th and 5th layers:

- Strengthen moral commitment and clarify the ultimate purpose of life.
- Cultivate higher compassion while instilling accountability.
- Put restrictions on actions and reactions, even in challenging situations.
- Provide a clear path to righteous and peaceful living, making a person completely reliable.

An individual:

- May have different levels of knowledge from different layers. Or
- May possess only basic knowledge from the first two layers but little to no understanding of the other three layers. Or
- May have specialized in one particular area of knowledge from any of the four layers.
- Deserve respect, irrespective of their level of knowledge, even if they have no understanding of God and religion at all.
- Whoever are involved in research, or have done researches and discoveries in the past, should be given special recognition, irrespective of their understanding of God and religion, because they discover hidden knowledge which helps us in different ways.

Now on this basis, you can conclude that **most of the people claiming to believe in God and religion, are actually not true believers in real sense. Whatever good things they do is mostly due to their instinctive morality and practices of societies and cultures, NOT due to BELIEF in God.**

Chapter 5:

History of Religion Based Persecution

As discussed earlier, human beings possess a remarkable ability to solve complex problems and overcome confusion through intellect and knowledge. Yet, despite this capability, religious conflicts and disputes have persisted in human society for centuries.

Despite having the potential to understand and resolve religious conflicts by exploring, analyzing and evaluating available resources of religious knowledge, many people—including intellectuals, scholars, and common individuals—avoid doing so due to the following key reasons:

- **Lack of Honest Willingness to understand:** Many are uninterested in going beyond their inherited beliefs or traditions. People even don't know, nor do they try to know the meaning of the crucial words and terms, and give reactions against or in favour of those terms. This causes a lot of confusion and misunderstanding.
- **Arrogance:** It is one of the most significant barriers to accepting what is true, correct, or better. People don't reconsider their belief or perspective because they do not want to admit they were wrong in the past. Some believe they are superior and hence their understanding is also superior and cannot be challenged.
- **Lack of Genuine Freedom:** This is the most significant factor that keeps traditions unchallenged and unchanged. It includes:
 - **Social Pressure** from arrogant individuals within a religious group or community who discourage questioning or reevaluation of traditions.
 - **Fear of Backlash** or **Alienation** makes individuals hesitate to speak up, even when they recognize flaws in their beliefs and traditions.
 - **Religious domination and persecution**, where people of one religious belief and tradition suppress or oppress those of other beliefs and traditions.
 - **Oppression and Persecution is state-sponsored**, or politically supported by powerful individuals and institutions of a specific religious belief and tradition.

This combination of factors prevents HONEST INQUIRY and OPEN DIALOGUE based on intellect and knowledge, thus allowing confusions, divisions, and conflicts to persist.

The world has witnessed numerous states and empires throughout history which had particular religious perspectives and traditions as state religion or state-sponsored religion, and often involved in religious-based persecution. People of religious beliefs and traditions different from state religion, or state-sponsored religion or ideology were oppressed, discriminated against, or executed.

Below is a brief overview of religion-based persecution by various states and empires across different periods. We have excluded the crusades (the religious wars between Muslim Empires and Christian Empires) in this list. If you're interested in exploring any of these cases in more detail, you can refer to available online resources.

History of Religion based Persecution by States and Empires around the World

- **Indus Valley Civilization (c. 3300-1900 BCE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Pakistan, Northwest India, Afghanistan.**

- State Religion: Unknown (likely polytheistic).
 - Rulers: Unknown (no deciphered written records).
 - Persecution: Limited information. Likely suppression of differing local beliefs through social pressure and possible destruction of rival religious artifacts.
- **Ancient Egypt (c. 3100-30 BCE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Egypt.**
 - State Religion: Polytheistic (various deities, Pharaoh as divine ruler)
 - Rulers: (Various Pharaohs, also known as Feraon).
 - Persecution: Religious conformity expected. Primarily through social pressure and the power of the priesthood.
- **Akhenaten's Egypt (c. 1353-1336 BCE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Egypt.**
 - State Religion: Atenism (monotheistic).
 - Rulers: Akhenaten.
 - Persecution: Suppression of traditional polytheistic worship by closing temples, confiscating property, and persecuting priests who resisted the change, and forcing the population to worship Aten.
- **The Persian Empire (c. 550-330 BCE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Iran, parts of the Middle East, Central Asia.**
 - State Religion: Zoroastrianism.
 - Rulers: (Cyrus the Great, Darius I, Xerxes I).
 - Persecution: Occasional suppression of revolts with religious components. Primarily through military force against those who used religious beliefs to oppose imperial authority.
- **The Maurya Empire (c. 322-185 BCE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh.**
 - State Religion: Varied (Buddhism under Ashoka).
 - Rulers: (Ashoka, Bindusara).
 - Persecution: Varied. Some persecution of other religions depending on the ruler, and their personal beliefs.
- **The Roman Empire (Pre-Christianity) (c. 27 BCE-313 CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Italy, parts of Europe, North Africa, Middle East.**
 - State Religion: Roman polytheism, Imperial cult.
 - Rulers: (Nero, Diocletian, Trajan).
 - Persecution: Persecution of those who threatened state religion, i.e., early Christians, through executions, imprisonment, and confiscation of property.
- **The Roman Empire (Early Christianity) (c. 1st-4th CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Italy, parts of Europe, North Africa, Middle East.**
 - State Religion: Roman polytheism.
 - Rulers: (Various Roman Emperors).
 - Persecution: Persecution of Christians for refusing Roman gods, threat to state stability. Executions, torture, imprisonment.
- **The Sasanian Empire (3rd-7th CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Iran, Iraq, parts of Central Asia.**
 - State Religion: Zoroastrianism.
 - Rulers: (Shapur II, Bahram V, Yazdegerd II).
 - Persecution: Persecution of religious minorities, including Christians, Manicheans, and Buddhists, through forced conversions, executions, and restrictions on religious practice.

- **Medieval Europe (c. 5th-15th CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Europe.**
 - State Religion: Catholic Christianity.
 - Rulers: (Various European monarchs, Popes).
 - Persecution: Persecution of heretics (Albigensians, etc.), Jews, and other minorities through inquisitions, pogroms, and expulsions.
- **The Byzantine Empire (c. 330-1453 CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Turkey, parts of Eastern Europe, Middle East.**
 - State Religion: Eastern Orthodox Christianity.
 - Rulers: (Justinian I, Heraclius, and various Byzantine Emperors).
 - Persecution: Persecution of heretics (like Arians) and other faiths through executions, exile, and suppression of religious writings.
- **Islamic Caliphates (c. 7th-13th CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Parts of Middle East, North Africa, Spain.**
 - State Religion: Islam.
 - Rulers: (Various Caliphs).
 - Persecution: Varying tolerance/persecution of philosophers accused of heresy (zandaqa) if their ideas were deemed to deviate significantly from Islamic orthodoxy, and also of non muslims, through taxation, and restrictions.
- **Khmer Empire (c. 9th-15th CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam.**
 - State Religion: Hinduism, Buddhism (varied).
 - Rulers: (Jayavarman VII, various Khmer Kings).
 - Persecution: some evidence of the suppression of previous religious beliefs, when a new king would change the state religion.
- **Ghaznavid Empire (c. 10th-12th CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, India.**
 - State Religion: Sunni Islam.
 - Rulers: (Mahmud of Ghazni, Mas'ud I).
 - Persecution: Destruction of Hindu temples, forced conversions, and massacres during military campaigns in India.
- **The Seljuk Empire (c. 11th-12th CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Iran, Turkey, parts of Middle East.**
 - State Religion: Sunni Islam.
 - Rulers: (Malik-Shah I, Alp Arslan).
 - Persecution: Persecution of Shia Muslims, particularly the Fatimid Caliphate, and other religious groups through military campaigns and suppression of religious practices.
- **Japanese Shogunate (c. 1192 to 1867 CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Japan.**
 - State Religion: Shinto and Buddhism, with periods of varying religious policies.
 - Rulers: (Tokugawa Ieyasu, various Shoguns).
 - Persecution: Suppression of Christianity, particularly during the Tokugawa Shogunate, through executions, forced apostasy, and restrictions on foreign religious influence.
- **The Medieval Inquisition (c. 12th-15th CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Europe.**
 - State Religion: Catholic Christianity.
 - Rulers: (Popes Gregory IX, Innocent IV).
 - Persecution: Torture, imprisonment, and execution of suspected heretics.

- **Ghurid Empire (c. 12th-13th CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Afghanistan, Pakistan, India.**
 - State Religion: Sunni Islam.
 - Rulers: (Muhammad of Ghor, Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad).
 - Persecution: Temple destruction, forced conversions, and massacres of Buddhist and Hindu populations during military campaigns.
- **The Delhi Sultanate (c. 1206-1526 CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **India, Pakistan, Bangladesh.**
 - State Religion: Sunni Islam.
 - Rulers: (Qutb ud-Din Aibak, Alauddin Khalji, Firuz Shah Tughluq).
 - Persecution: Destruction of Hindu temples, forced conversions, and imposition of the jizya tax on non-Muslims.
- **The Mongol Empire (c. 1206-1368 CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: Vast territories spanning from East Asia to Eastern Europe.
 - State Religion: Tengrism (traditional Mongol shamanism), with significant tolerance and patronage of various other religions.
 - Rulers: (Genghis Khan, Kublai Khan).
 - Persecution: Generally religious tolerance was the policy, with exemptions for religious leaders and patronage of multiple faiths. However, persecution occurred occasionally against groups perceived as resisting Mongol rule, due to specific decrees, or during later internal conflicts and ruler conversions.
- **The Ottoman Empire (c. 13th-20th CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Turkey, parts of Eastern Europe, Middle East, North Africa.**
 - State Religion: Sunni Islam.
 - Rulers: (Suleiman the Magnificent, various Ottoman Sultans).
 - Persecution: Persecution of religious minorities (Armenians, Greeks, Assyrians) through massacres (Armenian Genocide), forced conversions, and discriminatory laws.
- **Timurid Empire (c. 14th-16th CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Iran, Central Asia, parts of Middle East.**
 - State Religion: Sunni Islam.
 - Rulers: (Timur (Tamerlane), Shah Rukh).
 - Persecution: Violence targeted religious communities, and persecution of Shia Muslims, during military campaigns and periods of political instability.
- **The Renaissance (c. 14th-16th CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Europe.**
 - State Religion: Catholic Christianity.
 - Rulers: (Various European monarchs).
 - Persecution: Social ostracism and sometimes legal action against those who challenged religious orthodoxy.
- *****Witch trials in Europe, and America: (1450 - 1750 CE) -**
 - Religious fervor (intense and passionate feeling)
 - Fear of the devil and demonic forces.
 - Executions, torture, imprisonment.
- **Spanish Inquisition (c. 1478-1834 CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Spain.**
 - State Religion: Catholic Christianity.
 - Rulers: (Ferdinand and Isabella, various Spanish monarchs).

- Persecution: Torture, executions, and expulsions of converted Jews and Muslims suspected of practicing their former faiths.
- **Mughal Empire (c. 1526-1857 CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan.**
 - State Religion: Predominantly Sunni Islam.
 - Rulers: (Aurangzeb, Jahangir, Shah Jahan).
 - Persecution: Periods of persecution of Hindus and Sikhs, particularly under rulers like Aurangzeb, including temple destruction, imposition of the jizya tax, and discriminatory laws. Conversely, some rulers like Akbar promoted religious tolerance.
- **The Protestant Reformation (c. 16th CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Europe.**
 - State Religion: Various Protestant denominations.
 - Rulers: (Henry VIII, Mary I, various European monarchs).
 - Persecution: Religious wars, persecution of religious minorities (Catholics, Anabaptists, etc.) through executions, expulsions, and confiscation of property.
- **The Qing Dynasty (c. 1644-1912 CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **China, Mongolia, Taiwan.**
 - State Religion: Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism, with imperial patronage of specific traditions.
 - Rulers: (Kangxi Emperor, Qianlong Emperor, various Qing Emperors).
 - Persecution: Suppression of religious rebellions (White Lotus Rebellion, Taiping Rebellion), persecution of Christians, and restrictions on religious activities.
- **The Enlightenment (c. 17th-18th CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **Europe, North America.**
 - State Religion: Varied (decline of state religions).
 - Rulers: (Various European monarchs, philosophical movements).
 - Persecution: Social ostracism, legal restrictions, and occasional violence against those who challenged religious dogma or promoted atheism.
 - Emphasis on **reason, science, liberty**, and rise of **rationalism** and **atheism**.
- **The French Revolution (c. 1789-1799 CE):**
 - Modern-day Location: **France.**
 - State Religion: Secular state (Cult of Reason, Cult of the Supreme Being).
 - Rulers: (Robespierre, Revolutionary governments).
 - Persecution: Persecution of clergy, suppression of religious orders, and confiscation of church property.
 - Challenge to church power, **secularization of state**, Cult of Reason, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity (A group of people sharing a common profession or interests).
- **Anti-religion campaign (Marx-Lenin-Stalin):**

Karl Marx (1818-1883) laid an atheistic ideology, describing religion as "the opium of the people," viewing it as a tool used for ruling people. The Marxist ideology was led by Lenin (1917) and Stalin, who destroyed or closed all the religious buildings like churches, mosques, temples and synagogues. They persecuted religious leaders and believers, killing around 80 thousands scholars and more than 1 million believers of God, and banned the religious text and teachings, and promoted atheistic views.

They established the USSR in 1922, an atheist communist state, comprising **Russia, Belorussia, Ukraine, and the Transcaucasian Federation**, which was dissolved in 1991.

- **World War 1&2:**

There happened World War 1 (1914–1918) and World War 2 (1939-1945), mostly driven by ambition of power and economic supremacy in the name of nationalism, imperialism and racism, wherein, **millions of people were killed**. Germany and Japan played the most vital role in World War 2, and Germany in World War 1. The USA emerged as the Superpower of the world. The leader of Germany, Adolf Hitler, executed a genocide of approximately six million Jewish people, the incident is known as **Holocaust**

- **The partition of India (1947):**

- This was a deeply significant and traumatic event in the history of the Indian subcontinent.
- The partition triggered **one of the largest mass migrations** in human history.
- Millions of Hindus and Sikhs fled from Pakistan to India, while millions of Muslims fled from India to Pakistan.
- The partition was marked by **horrific communal violence** and bloodshed between Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims.

- **Modern States become Secular** - Many modern states have adopted secular constitutions that guarantee religious freedom and the separation of religion and state.
-

Conclusion

Throughout history, states and empires have directly or indirectly engaged in religion-based persecution. This persecution has taken many forms, including:

- **Violence:** Executions, massacres, torture, and imprisonment.
- **Discrimination:** Forced conversions, suppression of religious practices, discriminatory laws, and taxation.
- **Social Ostracism:** Exclusion, suppression of dissenting ideas, and propaganda.
- **Destruction:** Temple destruction, book burning, and the eradication of cultural artifacts.

This pattern spans across diverse civilizations, time periods, and religions, highlighting that the abuse of power through religious justification is a recurring theme in human history. But what Marx, Lenin and Stalin did to stop misuse of religion was even worse.

Religion based persecution has decreased on the state level due to secularization of states, however, it still exists in various forms around the world, such as campaigning and provoking hate and violence against those who criticise a perspective of God and religion, or decide to change, preach and propagate their view of God and religion. Religion is also misused as a tool by political parties in some countries even today.

Chapter 6:

Understanding God, Religion and Purpose of Life

As we have discussed, the different perspectives of religion have been causing division, hate and discrimination in the human society in the name of religion, that lead to injustice, violence, persecution and even terrorism. Occasionally, there have been conflicts between Believers and Non-Believers as well.

We will cover a summary of the concepts of God, Religion, and Purpose of life as understood and followed by different groups who claim to believe in God and religion, and as in the divine books, to understand the conflicts among them, clarify the confusions and and reason of conflicts.

Religions covered in this Book:

In the coming chapters, we will cover major religions which are Hinduism (often called Sanatana Dharma), Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, that are followed by most of the population of the world. Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism have their origins in India, and they share many similar philosophies, that's why the term Hinduism sometimes includes Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism as well.

We can also categorise the world into **East and West Regions** in terms of religion wherein the East region covers religions originated in India (Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism), while the West region covers Abrahamic Religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam). This classification is a broad categorization just for understanding, not a rigid divide for East v/s West.

Chapter 6.1: Hinduism

Hinduism, often referred to as Sanātana Dharma, is considered a diverse and ancient religion, tradition and philosophies of the Indian subcontinent. It draws upon a rich collection of scriptures like the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita and Puran, while offering various paths to spiritual realization through practices such as worship, meditation, and yoga, accommodating diverse philosophical schools like Vedanta, Samkhya, and various sects (Sampradaya) and movements like Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Shaktism, Arya Samaj, Ramakrishna Mission, etc.

Key Concepts in Hinduism:

- **Brahman:** The ultimate, formless, and all-pervading reality.
- **Deva/Devi (Deities):** Lesser deities with specific powers and attributes, often considered manifestations of Brahman.
- **Personal Deva/Devi:** Many Hindus focus on personal deities like Vishnu, Shiva, and Shakti (Devi), who are considered aspects or manifestations of Brahman. Some people often approach and worship them as distinct divine beings with specific roles.
- **Incarnation:** Manifestation of Brahman in the form of a human being, like Shri Rama and Shri Krishna.
- **Atman:** The individual soul, believed to be distinct from, part of, or identical to Brahman.
- **Dharma:** Righteous duty, moral and ethical law, rituals and devotion to God.
- **Artha:** Achieving material prosperity and wealth through lawful means.
- **Kama:** Experiencing love, pleasure, and fulfillment in relationships.
- **Karma:** Actions, with the law of cause and effect, which determine our future lives.
- **Samsara:** The cycle of birth, death, and rebirth.
- **Moksha:** Liberation from samsara, This is often considered the ultimate goal of life.

List of Major Sects (Sampradaya) and Philosophical Schools (Darshana) in Hinduism

Major Sampradaya (Focused on Deity/Devotion):

1. Vaishnava Sampradaya (Vaishnavism)
 - a. *Includes various traditions like Sri Vaishnavism, Brahma Sampradaya (which includes Gaudiya Vaishnavism), Rudra Sampradaya, Nimbarka Sampradaya, and modern movements like ISKCON.*
2. Shaiva Sampradaya (Shaivism)
3. Ganapatya Sampradaya (Less Common)
4. Kaumaram Sampradaya (Less Common)
5. Shakta Sampradaya (Shaktism)
6. Smartas (Smartism)

Major Philosophical Schools (Darshana):

1. Advaita Vedanta (Adi Shankaracharya)
2. Vishishtadvaita Vedanta (Ramanuja)
3. Dvaita Vedanta (Madhvacharya)
4. Shuddhadvaita Vedanta (Vallabhacharya)
5. Dvaitadvaita Vedanta (Nimbarka)
6. Achintya Bheda Abhedha (Chaitanya Mahaprabhu)
7. Samkhya (Kapila)

8. Yoga (Patanjali)
9. Nyaya (Gautama)
10. Vaisheshika (Kanada)
11. Mimamsa (Jaimini)
12. Tantra

Modern Hindu Reform Movements:

1. Brahmo Samaj (Raja Ram Mohan Roy)
2. Arya Samaj (Swami Dayanand Saraswati)
3. Ramakrishna Mission (Swami Vivekananda)
4. *International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) (A significant global movement within Gaudiya Vaishnavism)*

A Brief Summary of Concept of God, Key Practices and Purpose of Life in the Major Sects and Philosophical Schools of Hinduism:

1. Vaishnava Sampradaya (Vaishnavism):

- **God:** Vishnu or his avatars (Rama, Krishna) as supreme God, possessing countless auspicious qualities, including beauty, power, knowledge, and compassion.
- **Key Practices:** Bhakti (devotion) through temple worship, chanting, and service. God's grace (Kripa) is considered essential for achieving Moksha.
- **Purpose:** Attain eternal loving service to Vishnu in Vaikuntha.

2. Shaiva Sampradaya (Shaivism):

- **God:** Shiva (Mahadeva) as the ultimate reality, both destroyer and creator, the ultimate source of all existence. both transcendent and immanent, formless and with form, believed to dwell within the hearts of all living beings
 - **Ganesha and Kartikeya** are revered as sons of Shiva and Parvati and they are also important deities within this tradition.
 - Devotees of Shiva often worship Ganesha as the remover of obstacles and the god of beginnings before undertaking any venture or offering prayers to other deities, including Shiva himself.
 - Kartikeya is also highly revered in Shaivism, often seen as the god of war, victory, and a symbol of courage.
 - **Ganapatya Sampradaya:** There is also a smaller, distinct sect within Hinduism called Ganapatya, where Ganesha is worshipped as the Supreme Being.
 - **Kaumaram Sampradaya:** Similarly, the Kaumaram sect primarily venerates Kartikeya (often under his Tamil name Murugan) as the Supreme Deity, particularly in South India.
- **Key Practices:** Yoga, meditation, and ritual worship, sometimes Tantric practices. Shiva's grace is considered essential for achieving Moksha.
- **Purpose:** Attain union with Shiva through self-realization, with devotion to Shiva and spiritual practices

3. Ganapatya Sampradaya (Less Common):

- **God:** Ganesha as the supreme God, the ultimate reality (Parabrahman), the source of all creation and the remover of obstacles.

- **Key Practices:** Primary devotion and worship of Ganesha through temple rituals, chanting Ganesha mantras, offering specific foods (modaks), and seeking his blessings for success and removal of hindrances.
- **Purpose:** Attain liberation (Moksha) through devotion to Ganesha, realizing his supreme nature and merging with his divine essence.

4. Kaumaram Sampradaya (Less Common):

- **God:** Kartikeya (also known as Skanda or Murugan) as the supreme God, particularly in South India, and also the warrior deity, representing courage, wisdom, and victory over negative forces.
- **Key Practices:** Intense devotion and worship of Kartikeya, particularly prevalent in South India, through temple visits, participation in festivals (like Thaipusam), chanting his names and mantras, and offering specific forms of worship.
- **Purpose:** Achieve spiritual liberation (Moksha) through the grace of Kartikeya, often associated with overcoming inner and outer obstacles and attaining spiritual strength and wisdom.

5. Shakta Sampradaya (Shaktism):

- **God:** Devi (Divine Mother/Shakti) as the supreme power, the source of all creation, preservation, and destruction, also considered the source of Trimurti (Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva). Devi manifests in numerous forms (Durga, Kali, Lakshmi, Saraswati, etc.) each representing different aspects of her power.
- **Key Practices:** Rituals, mantras, yantras, and Tantric practices to awaken Kundalini.
- **Purpose:** Realize Devi's power within and attain liberation.

6. Smartas (Smartism):

- **God:** Emphasizing all deities, specifically Vishnu, Shiva, Devi, Surya, Ganesha and Kartikeya (also known as Skanda or Murugan), as manifestations of Brahman, promoting unity and religious tolerance. Smartas are free to choose their primary deity while still respecting and worshipping the other forms as manifestations of the same ultimate reality (Brahman).
- **Key Practices:** Jnana Yoga (knowledge), temple worship, and personal deity worship.
- **Purpose:** Realize the oneness of Atman and Brahman.

7. Advaita Vedanta (Adi Shankaracharya):

- **God:** Brahman as the sole, formless reality. Atman is Brahman.
- **Key Practices:** Jnana Yoga, self-inquiry, and discrimination.
- **Purpose:** Realize Atman-Brahman identity and transcend Maya (illusion).

8. Vishishtadvaita Vedanta (Ramanuja):

- **God:** Brahman (Vishnu) with attributes. Atman is a qualified part of Brahman.
- **Key Practices:** Bhakti Yoga, devotion, and surrender.
- **Purpose:** Attain eternal communion with Brahman in Vaikuntha.

9. Dvaita Vedanta (Madhvacharya):

- **God:** Brahman (Vishnu) is eternally distinct from Atman and matter.
- **Key Practices:** Bhakti Yoga, pure devotion, and service.
- **Purpose:** Serve Vishnu and attain eternal bliss in his presence.

10. Shuddhadvaita Vedanta (Vallabhacharya):

- **God:** Brahman (Krishna) as pure reality. Atman is part of Brahman.
- **Key Practices:** Pushti Marga (grace), surrender, and devotion.
- **Purpose:** Attain union with Krishna through his grace.

11. Dvaitadvaita Vedanta (Nimbarka):

- **God:** Brahman (Krishna) as both distinct and non-distinct from Atman.
- **Key Practices:** Bhakti Yoga, devotion to Radha and Krishna.
- **Purpose:** Attain eternal loving service to Radha and Krishna.

12. Achintya Bheda Abheda (Chaitanya Mahaprabhu):

- **God:** Krishna as simultaneously distinct and non-distinct from creation.
- **Key Practices:** Bhakti Yoga, Sankirtana (chanting).
- **Purpose:** Attain pure love (Prema) for Krishna.

13. Samkhya (Kapila):

- **God:** Atheistic; Purusha (consciousness) and Prakriti (matter) are independent.
- **Key Practices:** Discriminative knowledge (Viveka).
- **Purpose:** Attain Kaivalya (liberation) through Purusha's separation from Prakriti.

14. Yoga (Patanjali):

- **God:** Ishvara (personal God) as optional focus for meditation.
- **Key Practices:** Raja Yoga, eight limbs, and mind control.
- **Purpose:** Attain Samadhi (enlightenment) and liberation.

15. Nyaya (Gautama):

- **God:** Ishvara as creator, but focus on logic and knowledge.
- **Key Practices:** Valid means of knowledge (pramanas).
- **Purpose:** Attain liberation through valid knowledge.

16. Vaisheshika (Kanada):

- **God:** Ishvara as cause, focus on atomic reality.
- **Key Practices:** Understanding categories and atoms.
- **Purpose:** Attain liberation through understanding reality.

17. Mimamsa (Jaimini):

- **God:** Vedic rituals, not personal God.
- **Key Practices:** Prioritizes Vedic rituals and duties over a personal God
- **Purpose:** Fulfill Vedic duties and attain desired outcomes, later Mimamsa (e.g., Kumarila Bhatta) emphasizes Moksha.

18. Tantra:

- **God:** Shakti and Shiva as ultimate energies.
- **Key Practices:** Rituals, mantras, yantras, and Kundalini awakening.

- **Purpose:** Achieve liberation through transformed consciousness and Shiva-Shakti union.

19. Brahmo Samaj (Raja Ram Mohan Roy):

- **God:** Formless, attributeless, and transcendent God, similar to the concept of Nirguna Brahman. They rejected polytheism and idol worship, emphasizing the worship of one supreme, universal God.
- **Key Practices:** Worship of one formless God, emphasized reason, the importance of moral conduct, ethical principles, social reform, and the pursuit of spiritual knowledge, and the teachings of the Upanishads.
- **Purpose:** Living a righteous life, cultivating a direct relationship with God, and serving humanity.

20. Arya Samaj (Dayanand Saraswati):

- **God:** One formless God (OM).
- **Key Practices:** Vedic principles, yajna, and social reform.
- **Purpose:** Attain Moksha through righteous living and knowledge.

21. Ramakrishna Mission (Swami Vivekananda):

- **God:** Same as Advaita Vedanta philosophy, emphasizing the oneness of existence and the divinity of all beings..
- **Key Practices:** Practical Vedanta, service to humanity, emphasizing "Shiva Jnane Jiva Seva" (serving living beings as serving God), and spiritual practices.
- **Purpose:** Realize oneness and serve God in all beings.

22. ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness):

- **God:** Krishna is the supreme, personal God, the source of all existence. All other deities are considered expansions or incarnations of Krishna.
- **Key Practices:** Bhakti Yoga (devotional service) including chanting the Hare Krishna mantra, deity worship, studying scriptures (especially the Bhagavad Gita and Srimad Bhagavatam), and following a regulated lifestyle. Emphasis is placed on purity, vegetarianism, and avoiding harmful activities.
- **Purpose:** The ultimate purpose is to develop pure love for Krishna and return to Godhead (Vaikuntha), and achieve eternal association with Krishna. Serving Krishna and his devotees is considered the highest form of activity.

Major Hindu Scriptures:

- The **Vedas** (Rigveda, Samaveda, Yajurveda, and Atharvaveda) are the primary texts considered Shruti (believed to be divinely revealed and eternal), the oldest and most authoritative scriptures. Each Veda is further divided into four parts:
 - Samhitas: Hymns and prayers
 - Brahmanas: Prose texts detailing rituals and their significance
 - Aranyakas: "Forest Books" containing philosophical reflections and practices for hermits
 - Upanishads: Philosophical dialogues and treatises that explore the nature of reality, the self (Atman), and the ultimate reality (Brahman).
- Bhagavad Gita, Epics (Ramayana, Mahabharata), Puranas, Agamas and Tantras are secondary scriptures, classified as "Smriti" meaning "that which is remembered," which are considered interpretations and elaborations of the Vedic truths through stories, allegories, and practical guidelines.

- Smritis are also considered incredibly important texts and widely followed. The Bhagavad Gita, in particular, is considered a synthesis of Vedic philosophy and is highly respected across various Hindu traditions.
- The Puranas, Ramayana and Mahabharata play a vital role in shaping Hindu culture and morality.
- Other Smritis like Manusmriti, Narada Smriti and Vishnu Smriti provide legal text, covering laws, ethics, religious and social duties.
- The Agamas and Tantras are also considered authoritative sources for specific sects (Shaivism, Shaktism) and provide detailed instructions for rituals and practices.
- The Vedanta Darshan heavily rely on the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita while forming their philosophies.

In conclusion, the Hindu scriptures indicate that GOD is ONLY ONE, Formless and the Ultimate Reality, other deities mentioned are just the different manifestations of the same God, as the Rig Veda confirms that different names of deities are just the attributive names of the one God, which concludes that THERE IS NO DEITY EXCEPT THE ONE. Have a look at the below two verses from the Vedas.

Rig Veda	1.164.46	"एकं सद्भिप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति अग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानम् आहुः"	"Truth is one, but the wise call it by many names—Agni, Yama, and Mātariśvan."
Yajur Veda	32.3	न तस्य प्रतिमा अस्ति यस्य नाम महद्यशः	"There is no image of Him; His name is great and glorious."

“Sanatan” is Not a Name of Dharma (Religion):

The term "Sanatan Dharma" as a formal, named religion is not explicitly found as such in the early scriptures of Hinduism like the Vedas, Upanishads, or early epics.

The term “Sanatan Dharma” used as the *name* of the religion is a later development and not present in the earliest texts. The scriptures emphasize the eternal nature of Dharma itself, rather than labeling the entire tradition with this specific name.

When we say Sanatan Dharma, we actually say that **Dharma (Religion) is Sanatan (Eternal)**. Here, Dharma refers to righteous duty, moral law, or it may also include rituals and devotion to God. Some people say any tradition or philosophy originated in India is part of Sanatan Dharma, even they include atheistic philosophies as well. Probably, they do not know that Sanatan refers to Eternal Truth, something that does not change over time, and cannot be created by humans. They all can be called as parts of Hinduism, but not parts of Sanatan Dharma.

In essence, since rituals and devotional practices vary greatly across different regions, communities, and philosophical schools and traditions, hence, only **Righteous Duty and Moral Law is Eternal (Sanatan), not the Way of Rituals and Devotional Practices**.

Death, Rebirth and Afterlife:

There is no verse in Vedas which clearly suggests rebirth doctrine, while there are verses which point out to Svarga as a realm of bliss attained after death by those who perform righteous deeds and sacrifices, and mentions of continued existence after death.

For example:

Rigveda 9.113:

It contains hymns where there are prayers to be placed in a realm where there is immortality with eternal bliss and light, and no suffering or decay.

Rigveda 10.14:

It describes the journey of the soul after death, following the path shown by Yama. It refers to the realm where the Pitris (forefathers) reside, a place of rest and continued existence. It expresses a hope for a continued existence after death, and that is in a different realm. This primarily suggests a linear journey to an afterlife, rather than a cyclical process of rebirth.

The hymn is used in funeral rituals, emphasizing the importance of offerings to Yama and the Pitris. These rituals are seen as essential for ensuring a safe passage to the afterlife.

Rigveda 10.15:

This hymn is dedicated to the Pitris, the departed ancestors, primarily focusing on honoring and appeasing the ancestors. It invokes and honors them, seeking their blessings and protection. The hymn reinforces the idea of a continued existence after death in a different realm and connection between the world of the living and the world of the dead.

The Cycle of Rebirth Emerges in Upanishad:

It is the Upanishads where the doctrine of rebirth becomes explicit and central. They elaborate on the concepts of karma, samsara (the cycle of rebirth), and moksha (liberation), and the idea of the soul being reborn according to its actions becomes a key doctrine.

Chandogya Upanishad 5.10.7:

Those who perform "ramaniya charana" (good deeds) are said to be likely to take birth in respectable castes. Those who perform "kapuya charana" (bad deeds) are said to be likely to take birth in lower forms.

This verse essentially speaks about the consequences of one's actions in this life determining their future births.

Reforms in Hinduism:

Due the emergence and developments of sects, practice of polytheism and idol worship over time, many recent spiritual reformers—like Swami Dayananda Saraswati (Arya Samaj), Swami Vivekananda, and others—emphasized returning to the **Essence of Dharma**, which is realizing and submitting to the One Supreme Reality, beyond forms and divisions.

A Summary of Concept of God, Purpose of Life, Ritual and Spiritual Practices in Hinduism:

Concept of God:

- **One Supreme Reality:** Ultimate reality, eternal, all-encompassing.
- **Formless & With Forms:** Beyond any form, and manifested in forms as well.
- **Creator:** Source of all existence.
- **Sustainer:** Maintains the universe, ensuring balance.
- **Destroyer/Transformer:** Ends cycles for new beginnings.
- **Omnipresent:** Present everywhere.
- **Omniscient:** Knows everything.
- **Transcendent & Immanent:** Beyond creation, yet within it.
- **Manifests in Avatars:** Descends in physical form to help and guide (in Later Scriptures).
- **Cosmic Energy (Shakti):** Dynamic power behind the universe.

Purpose of Life:

- Hinduism posits a cyclical existence (Samsara) driven by karma, where the soul (Atman) is reborn into various life forms.
- While the ultimate goal is liberation (Moksha) from this cycle, the immediate afterlife involves the soul transiting to different realms (Loka) based on its karmic merit.
- These can range from heavenly abodes (Svarga) offering temporary pleasures to lower realms, before the soul is reborn. The specific experiences vary greatly depending on one's actions and attachments in life.
- Ultimate purpose is 1) Loving service to Vishnu in the afterlife, 2) Union of Atman (individual soul) with Brahman, or 3) Realization of Atman as Brahman.

Ritual and Spiritual Practices:

- Daily worship (Puja) with offerings, chanting of mantras, participation in temple ceremonies, fasting, pilgrimage, study of sacred scriptures.
- Observance of festivals, and performance of life-cycle rites (Samskaras).
- Various paths (Yogas) are practiced, such as Bhakti Yoga (devotion), Karma Yoga (selfless action), Jnana Yoga (knowledge), and Raja Yoga (meditation),

Chapter 6.2: Jainism

Jainism is often described as atheistic, but more accurately it is trans-theistic. It does not posit a creator God in the traditional sense, rather it focuses on the concept of Jinas, enlightened beings who have conquered their inner passions and attained liberation (Moksha). Tirthankaras are Jinas who have shown the path to liberation. They are revered as ideal beings, but not as creators or rulers of the universe. The goal is to progress spiritually and become a Jina, a conqueror of inner passions.

While Mahavira, the 24th Tirthankara, who lived around 6th century BCE, is often credited with its resurgence, Jain tradition recognizes a lineage of 23 previous Tirthankaras, indicating a much earlier existence.

Jainism evolved through the teachings of these spiritual leaders, emphasizing a path to spiritual purity and enlightenment through disciplined nonviolence (ahimsa) towards all living beings. It was formalized into its current structure over centuries, with the Agamas being compiled and the eventual division into the Svetambara and Digambara sects occurring later.

Key Aspects in Jainism:

Cosmology and Metaphysics:

- **Loka (Universe):** Jain cosmology describes the universe as an eternal, self-sustaining entity, without a creator. It is divided into three realms:
 - Upper World (Urdhva Loka): Abode of liberated souls and celestial beings.
 - Middle World (Madhya Loka): Where humans and other beings reside.
 - Lower World (Adho Loka): Inhabited by hellish beings.
- **Dravyas (Substances):** Jain philosophy recognizes six eternal and independent substances (dravyas) that constitute reality:
 - **Jiva (Soul):** Conscious entities. Categorized based on their level of sensory development, from one-sensed (plants) to five-sensed (humans). Inherent qualities include infinite knowledge (Ananta Jnana), infinite perception (Ananta Darshana), infinite bliss (Ananta Sukha), and infinite energy (Ananta Virya).
 - **Ajiva or Pudgala (Matter):** Non-conscious physical substances. It is understood as being made up of atoms (paramanus) that can combine and dissociate.
 - **Dharma (Medium of Motion):** Enables movement.
 - **Adharma (Medium of Rest):** Enables stillness.
 - **Kala (Time):** Measured in cycles.
 - **Akasha (Space):** Provides room for all other substances.
- **Karma as a Subtle Substance:** Unlike other Indian philosophies, Jainism views karma as a literal, subtle form of matter that adheres to the soul. It obscures the soul's inherent qualities of infinite knowledge, bliss, and power. The type of karma accumulated determines one's future births and experiences.
- **Lesyas (Psychic Colorations):** Lesyas are mental states or psychic colorations that influence one's actions and karmic accumulation. They range from black (most negative) to white (most positive).

Sects in Jainism

There are two main sects; Digambara and Svetambara, and subsects as well within these. Here's a detailed look:

1. Digambara (Sky-Clad):

- **Core Beliefs:**

- Practice complete nudity for monks, symbolizing total renunciation.
- Believe that women cannot attain Moksha in their current birth; they must be reborn as men.
- Hold that the original Agamas were lost and rely on later commentaries and scriptures.
- Deity images are plain and unadorned.

- **Key Distinctions:**

- Emphasis on rigorous asceticism and complete detachment.
- Strict adherence to traditional interpretations of the scriptures.

- **Subsects:**

- **Bisapanthi:**
 - Worship idols with offerings of flowers, fruits, and other materials.
 - They have Bhattarakas (religious heads).
- **Terapanthi (Digambara):**
 - A reform movement within Digambarism.
 - Rejects the authority of Bhattarakas.
 - Emphasizes stricter adherence to the scriptures and monastic practices.
 - Focus on inner purification.
- **Terapanthi (or Samaiyapanthi):**
 - Focuses on the study of the Samayasara and other spiritual texts.
 - Rejects idol worship and temple rituals.
 - Emphasizes inner spiritual practice.

2. Svetambara (White-Clad):

- **Core Beliefs:**

- Monks and nuns wear white clothing.
- Believe women can attain Moksha in their current birth.
- Accept the canonical status of the currently available Agamas.
- Deity images are often adorned with clothing and ornaments.

- **Key Distinctions:**

- Relatively less stringent ascetic practices compared to Digambaras.
- Greater flexibility in interpreting scriptures and adapting to changing times.

- **Subsects:**

- **Murtipujak (Deravasi):**
 - Worship idols in temples (Derasars).
 - Engage in elaborate rituals and offerings.

- They are the most numerous Svetambara groups.
- **Sthanakvasi:**
 - Reject idol worship and temple rituals.
 - Worship in prayer halls (Sthanakas).
 - Emphasize simplicity and inner spiritual practice.
- **Terapanthi (Svetambara):**
 - A reform movement founded by Acharya Bhikshu.
 - Emphasizes strict monastic discipline and adherence to the Agamas.
 - Has a centralized leadership structure with a single Acharya.
 - Focus on inner purification and meditation.

Key Areas of Difference Summarized:

- **Nudity vs. Clothing:** The most visible difference.
- **Women's Liberation:** Differing views on women's ability to attain Moksha.
- **Scriptural Authority:** Differing views on the authenticity and interpretation of the Agamas.
- **Idol Worship:** Some sects emphasize it, others reject it.
- **Monastic Practices:** Variations in the rigor of asceticism.
- **Leadership:** Some sects have hierarchical structures, others do not.
- **Ritual Practices:** Differences in the performance of religious ceremonies.

Scriptures

Jainism draws upon a rich collection of scriptures, collectively known as the **Agamas**. These texts are considered the authoritative source of Jain teachings. Here's a breakdown:

Agamas (Āgama Sūtras):

- These are the canonical texts of Jainism, believed to contain the teachings of Mahavira and other Tirthankaras.
- They are traditionally transmitted orally, and later written down.
- The Agamas are broadly divided into:
 - **Angas (Limbs):** These are the core texts, containing the fundamental doctrines of Jainism.
 - **Upangas (Subsidiary Limbs):** These texts expand on the teachings of the Angas.
 - **Prakirnakas (Scattered Pieces):** These cover various topics, including rituals and stories.
 - **Chedasutras (Cut-off Texts):** These deal with monastic rules and regulations.
 - **Mulasutras (Root Texts):** These are essential texts for monastic life.
 - **Culikasutras (Supplementary Texts):** These are supplementary texts that further explain Jain principles.

A Summary of Concept of God, Purpose of Life, Ritual and Spiritual Practices in Jainism:

Concept of God:

- Jainism is trans-theistic, not theistic.
- It rejects a creator God, focusing on Jinas (conquerors) and Tirthankaras (spiritual guides) as role models of liberated souls.

Purpose of Life:

- To achieve Moksha (liberation) from the cycle of birth and death (Samsara) by purifying the soul (Jiva) through the eradication of karma and the realization of its inherent qualities.
- Jainism believes in an eternal individual soul (Jiva) bound by karma, leading to a cycle of birth and death.
- Upon death, the soul immediately transmigrates to its next body based on its karmic state.
- The goal is to purify the soul through right faith, knowledge, and conduct, ultimately achieving liberation (Moksha) where the soul resides in a state of pure bliss and knowledge, separate from the material world.
- Jain cosmology includes heavenly and hellish realms as temporary destinations based on karma.

Rituals and Spiritual Practices:

- Emphasizes ethical living through the Five Vows (Ahimsa, Satya, Asteya, Brahmacharya, Aparigraha), the Three Jewels (Right Faith, Knowledge, Conduct), and asceticism.
- Practices include meditation, fasting, and self-discipline to eradicate karma.

Chapter 6.3: Buddhism

Buddhism, founded by Siddhartha Gautama (the Buddha) in the 6th century BCE, centers on the Four Noble Truths, which explain the nature of suffering, and the Eightfold Path, which offers a way to end it. Buddhists seek enlightenment (nirvana) through practices like meditation, ethical conduct, and cultivating wisdom. It emphasizes the impermanence of all things, the interconnectedness of existence, and the importance of compassion for all beings, without belief in a creator god.

Core Teachings:

- **The Four Noble Truths:**

- Dukkha (Suffering): Life inherently involves suffering.
- Samudaya (Origin of Suffering): Suffering arises from craving and attachment.
- Nirodha (Cessation of Suffering): Suffering can cease.
- Magga (Path to the Cessation of Suffering): The Eightfold Path leads to the end of suffering.

- **The Eightfold Path:**

- Right Understanding
- Right Thought
- Right Speech
- Right Action
- Right Livelihood
- Right Effort
- Right Mindfulness
- Right Concentration

- **Three Marks of Existence:**

- Anicca (Impermanence): All things are constantly changing.
- Dukkha (Suffering): Life is inherently unsatisfactory.
- Anatta (Non-self): There is no permanent, unchanging self.

- **Karma and Rebirth:**

Actions have consequences, leading to rebirth in different realms of existence.

- **Nirvana:**

The ultimate goal, a state of liberation from suffering and the cycle of rebirth.

Major Sects of Buddhism:

Buddhism has evolved into three main branches: Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana.

1. Theravada (The School of the Elders):

- **Characteristics:**

- Considered the oldest surviving Buddhist school.
- Emphasizes the monastic path and individual liberation.
- Focuses on the teachings of the Pali Canon.
- Arhat (worthy one) is the ideal of enlightenment.

- Predominant in Southeast Asia (Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia).
- **Key Practices:**
 - Meditation (especially Vipassana and Samatha).
 - Monastic discipline (Vinaya).
 - Study of the Pali Canon.
- **Philosophy:**
 - Focuses on the early teachings of the Buddha.
 - Emphasizes the impermanence of all phenomena and the non-self doctrine.

2. Mahayana (The Great Vehicle):

- **Characteristics:**
 - Emerged later than Theravada.
 - Emphasizes the Bodhisattva ideal, where practitioners strive for enlightenment to benefit all beings.
 - Recognizes a broader range of scriptures, including the Mahayana sutras.
 - Believes in the concept of emptiness (sunyata).
 - Predominant in East Asia (China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam).
- **Key Concepts:**
 - Bodhisattva: An enlightened being who postpones their own Nirvana to help others.
 - Sunyata (Emptiness): The understanding that all phenomena lack inherent existence.
 - Buddha-nature: The potential for enlightenment inherent in all beings.
 - Three Bodies of the Buddha (Trikaya): Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, and Nirmanakaya.
- **Major Schools within Mahayana:**
 - **Zen (Chan):** Emphasizes meditation and direct experience.
 - **Pure Land:** Focuses on devotion to Amitabha Buddha and rebirth in his Pure Land.
 - **Nichiren:** Emphasizes the Lotus Sutra and chanting the name of the Lotus Sutra.
 - **Tiantai (Tendai):** Emphasizes the Lotus Sutra and the integration of various Buddhist teachings.

3. Vajrayana (The Diamond Vehicle):

- **Characteristics:**
 - Evolved from Mahayana.
 - Emphasizes tantric practices, including rituals, mantras, and visualizations.
 - Utilizes esoteric teachings and initiations.
 - Lama is the spiritual teacher.
 - Predominant in Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, and Mongolia.
- **Key Practices:**
 - Tantra: Esoteric practices aimed at accelerating the path to enlightenment.
 - Mantra recitation.
 - Mandala and thangka visualizations.
 - Guru yoga: Devotion to the spiritual teacher.
- **Key Concepts:**
 - Buddha families: Five archetypal Buddhas representing different aspects of enlightenment.
 - Deity yoga: Visualizing oneself as a Buddha or Bodhisattva.
 - Transformation of negative emotions into wisdom.
- **Major Schools within Vajrayana:**

- **Nyingma:** The oldest school of Tibetan Buddhism.
- **Kagyü:** Emphasizes meditation and direct transmission of teachings.
- **Sakya:** Focuses on scriptural study and tantric practices.
- **Gelug:** Emphasizes monastic discipline and philosophical study, led by the Dalai Lama.

Key Differences Summarized:

- **Theravada:** Focuses on individual liberation through monastic practice and adherence to the early teachings.
- **Mahayana:** Emphasizes the Bodhisattva path and the concept of emptiness, with a broader range of scriptures and practices.
- **Vajrayana:** Utilizes tantric practices and esoteric teachings to accelerate the path to enlightenment.

A Summary of Concept of God, Purpose of Life, Ritual and Spiritual Practices in Buddhism:

Concept of God:

- Buddhism is generally non-theistic. It does not focus on a creator God.
- The Buddha is revered as a teacher and an example of enlightenment, not as a deity.
- Some Mahayana traditions incorporate concepts of Buddha-fields and Bodhisattvas, which can be seen as powerful spiritual beings, but they are still not creator Gods.

Purpose of Life:

- To achieve Nirvana, a state of liberation from suffering and the cycle of rebirth (Samsara).
- The goal is to end suffering (Dukkha) and attain enlightenment.
- Buddhism views life and death as a continuum, with consciousness continuing after death, leading to rebirth.
- This rebirth is not a transmigration of a fixed soul but a continuation of karmic energy influencing the next life.
- The cycle of rebirth (Samsara) continues until Nirvana is attained, a state beyond suffering and the cycle itself.
- Buddhist cosmology includes various realms of rebirth, from heavenly to hellish, but all within Samsara and impermanent.

Rituals and Spiritual Practices:

- Emphasis on inner transformation through meditation (Samatha and Vipassana).
- Ethical conduct (Sila) through the Five Precepts.
- Chanting sutras and mantras.
- Puja (offerings) to Buddha images or stupas.
- Study of the Dharma (teachings).
- Vajrayana Buddhism includes tantric practices.

Chapter 6.4: Sikhism

Sikhism is a monotheistic religion founded on the teachings of Guru Nanak and the ten subsequent Gurus, whose writings are compiled in the Guru Granth Sahib. Sikhs believe in one formless God (Ik Onkar), emphasize equality, selfless service (seva), honest living (kirat karni), and meditation on God's name (naam simran). The ultimate goal is to unite with God, breaking the cycle of reincarnation through devotion, ethical conduct, and living in accordance with God's will.

Core Sikh Beliefs:

- **Ik Onkar or Waheguru (One God):** Monotheism is central, with a belief in a formless, timeless, and all-pervading God.
- **Guru Granth Sahib:** The holy scripture, revered as the eternal Guru, containing the teachings of the ten Gurus and other saints.
- **Ten Gurus:** From Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, their teachings and examples guide Sikh life.
- **Five Ks:** For initiated Sikhs (Khalsa), the five articles of faith: Kesh (uncut hair), Kara (steel bracelet), Kirpan (sword), Kacchera (shorts), and Kangha (comb).
- **Rehat Maryada** (code of conduct): Official code of conduct, a comprehensive document that outlines the principles, guidelines, and rules that Sikhs are expected to follow in their daily lives.
- **Emphasis on:**
 - **Simran** (meditation)
 - **Seva** (selfless service)
 - **Honest living** (Kirat Karni)
 - **Equality** (Sarbat da Bhala)

Variations and Movements (Sampradayas):

While united in core beliefs, Sikhism has seen the emergence of various groups over time, each with its own interpretations and practices. These are better understood as traditions or movements within Sikhism. The Guru Granth Sahib is the central religious authority for all Sikh groups. Here's a breakdown:

1. Khalsa:

- The initiated order, established by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699.
- Adherence to the "Five Ks" (Kesh, Kara, Kirpan, Kacchera, Kangha) and the Rahit Maryada (code of conduct).
- **Nihangs:**
 - A warrior order within the Khalsa.
 - Known for their distinctive blue attire, elaborate turbans, and martial skills (Gatka).
 - Maintain traditional Sikh practices and play a role in preserving Sikh martial arts.
- **Nirmalas:**
 - A scholarly order dedicated to theological studies and the preservation of Sikh scriptures.
 - Historically focused on Sanskrit and Vedic studies, contributing to Sikh intellectual traditions.

2. Sahajdhari:

- Those who follow the teachings of the Gurus but may not have taken Amrit (initiation) or adhere to all the "Five Ks."
- Represents a path towards full Khalsa initiation.

3. Udasi:

- Founded by Sri Chand, Guru Nanak's son.
- Historically played a vital role in maintaining Sikh shrines, particularly during periods of persecution.
- Often practice asceticism, which differs from the mainstream householder emphasis.

4. Namdhari:

- Believe in a continuing line of living Gurus after Guru Gobind Singh.
- Emphasize a simple lifestyle, strict vegetarianism, and social reform.
- Known for their distinctive white attire.
- This belief in a living Guru after Guru Gobind Singh is a key theological difference between Namdhari and mainstream Sikhism.

5. Nirankari:

- It is crucial to distinguish between the original Nirankari movement and the Sant Nirankari Mission.
- **Original Nirankari:** A 19th-century reform movement emphasizing the formless nature of God (Nirankar).
- **Sant Nirankari Mission:** A separate group with distinct theological beliefs, which has caused controversy within the Sikh community.
- The disputes between the Sant Nirankari Mission and mainstream Sikhs revolve around the nature of Guruship and scriptural interpretation.

6. Radha Soami:

- While influenced by Sikhism, Radha Soami groups are generally considered distinct.
- They have their own living gurus and spiritual practices.
- There are many different Radha Soami groups.

A Summary of Concept of God, Purpose of Life, Ritual and Spiritual Practices in Sikhism:

Concept of God (Ik Onkar):

- God, known as Waheguru (Wonderful Teacher/God), is of one, formless (Nirankar), timeless (Akaal), and all-pervading reality, the sole creator, sustainer, and destroyer of the universe.
- Waheguru is beyond human comprehension and description, yet can be experienced through His creation and the divine word (Shabad) as revealed by the ten Sikh Gurus in the Guru Granth Sahib.
- The ultimate goal of a Sikh is to realize their oneness with Waheguru through devotion (Bhakti), meditation (Naam Japna), righteous living, and selfless service, ultimately merging back into the Divine.

Purpose of Life:

- Sikhism views death as a natural process, with only the physical body ceasing to exist while the soul continues its journey through reincarnation.
- The ultimate aim is to break free from this cycle and reunite with God (Waheguru).

- Through righteous living, meditation on God's name (Naam Simran), and divine grace, the soul can eventually merge with the Divine in Sachkhand (the Realm of Truth), a state of eternal peace and bliss.

Rituals and Spiritual Practices:

- Emphasizes ethical living through the **Three Pillars (Naam Japna, Kirat Karni, Wand Chhako)**
- Adherence to the **Five Ks** for initiated Sikhs.
- Practices include **meditation on God's name (Naam Japna)**,
- Participation in the **holy congregation (Sangat)**
- Observing Sikh ceremonies centered around the **Guru Granth Sahib**, aimed at living according to God's will, and achieving spiritual union with Waheguru.

Chapter 6.5: Judaism

Judaism is a monotheistic religion, believing in One Supreme Being, grounded in the covenant between God and the Jewish people, as revealed in the Torah (the divine Book). It emphasizes one indivisible God, ethical behavior, and adherence to God's commandments (mitzvot). Jewish life revolves around studying sacred texts, observing traditions, and striving for justice and righteousness, with a focus on repairing the world (tikkun olam) and maintaining a unique relationship with God.

Name of God:

Jews refer to the Supreme being as YHWH, which is the four Hebrew letters (יהוה) that constitute the personal name of God in the Hebrew Bible. The name is closely linked to the Hebrew verb "to be"

Historically, Jewish tradition held the name so sacred that it was not pronounced aloud. Instead, when reading the Hebrew scriptures, they would substitute "Adonai" (Lord), HaShem (The Name) and Elohim or Eloah (God).

Note: Since the same God is recognised in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, we will cover the concept of God in the section of Islam.

Major Movements in Contemporary Judaism:

Judaism is rich in history, tradition, and diverse interpretations. Modern Judaism is broadly divided into several major movements, each with its own approach to Jewish law, theology, and practice:

1. Orthodox Judaism:

- Adheres strictly to traditional Jewish law (Halakha) as interpreted by rabbinic authorities.
- Believes in the divine origin of both the Written Torah and the Oral Torah.
- Emphasizes traditional rituals and observances.
- Within Orthodoxy, there are further distinctions, including:
 - **Haredi Judaism (Ultra-Orthodox):** Characterized by a strong emphasis on strict adherence to Halakha and a separation from modern secular culture. Hasidic Judaism is a branch of Haredi Judaism, known for its mystical focus and leadership of a Rebbe.
 - **Modern Orthodox Judaism:** Seeks to integrate traditional Jewish observance with engagement in modern society.

2. Conservative Judaism (Masorti Judaism):

- Occupies a middle ground between Orthodox and Reform Judaism.
- Views Jewish law as binding but believes it can evolve over time through rabbinic interpretation.
- Values tradition while also engaging with modern scholarship.

3. Reform Judaism:

- Emphasizes ethical principles and individual autonomy in Jewish practice.
- Views the Torah as divinely inspired but not necessarily as literal.
- Adapts Jewish traditions to modern contexts.
- Tends to be more liberal in its interpretations of Jewish law.

4. Reconstructionist Judaism:

- Views Judaism as an evolving civilization.
- Emphasizes the cultural and historical aspects of Judaism.
- Promotes egalitarianism and social justice.

A Summary of Concept of God, Purpose of Life, Ritual and Spiritual Practices in Judaism:

Concept of God:

- God is absolutely one, indivisible, incorporeal, and eternal, the sole creator and sustainer of the universe who is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, yet also intimately involved in the world and the lives of humanity.

Purpose of Life:

- Jewish beliefs about the afterlife are diverse, ranging from the early concept of Sheol, a shadowy underworld, to later rabbinic ideas of Gan Eden (Paradise) and Gehinnom (Hell) as places of reward and punishment.
- The concept of Olam Ha-Ba (the World to Come) can refer to a Messianic Age on Earth or a spiritual afterlife. Some traditions also include belief in the resurrection of the dead and, in mystical traditions, reincarnation (Gilgul).

Ritual and Spiritual Practices:

- Daily prayers (Shacharit, Mincha, Maariv), the recitation of the Shema, observance of the Sabbath (Shabbat) with restrictions on work and creative activities,
- Adherence to dietary laws (Kashrut), and participation in synagogue services involving Torah readings and communal prayer.
- Key life cycle events are marked by specific rituals such as Brit Milah (circumcision), Bar and Bat Mitzvah, weddings under the Chuppah, and mourning practices like Shiva.
- Additionally, Jewish holidays with unique observances and mitzvot (commandments) throughout the year provide a framework for spiritual growth and connection to Jewish heritage and the covenant with God

Chapter 6.6: Christianity

Christianity is a monotheistic religion centered on the belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Messiah, whose life, death, and resurrection offer salvation to humanity. Christians believe in one God existing as a Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Jesus, as in the Bible, claims that he has come to continue the same religion of the God of Israel (the Jews), with rectification and confirmation of truth. Hence Christianity, in essence, was not a new perspective of religion, but the emergence of the concept of Trinity made it a distinct religion.

Core Beliefs:

- **Trinity:** Belief in one God existing in three persons: Father, Son (Jesus Christ), and Holy Spirit.
- **Jesus Christ:** Belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, his incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension.
- **Bible:** The Holy Scripture, comprising the Old Testament and the New Testament (Torah and Gospel).
- **Salvation:** Belief in salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

Major Branches of Christianity:

Christianity encompasses a vast array of denominations and traditions. Understanding its complexities requires examining its historical development and theological variations. Here's a breakdown:

Christianity is broadly divided into three major branches:

- **Roman Catholics:**
 - Led by the Pope, considered the successor of Saint Peter.
 - Emphasizes the authority of the Church and its traditions, alongside the Bible.
 - Practices seven sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.
 - Veneration of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the saints.
- **Eastern Orthodoxy:**
 - Comprises a collection of self-governing churches, each led by a patriarch or bishop.
 - Emphasizes the importance of tradition, liturgy, and mystical experience.
 - Veneration of icons and saints.
 - Differs from Catholicism on theological points, such as the procession of the Holy Spirit.
- **Protestant:**
 - Originated in the 16th-century Reformation, seeking to reform the Roman Catholic Church.
 - Emphasizes "sola scriptura" (Scripture alone) and "sola fide" (faith alone).
 - Encompasses a wide range of denominations, including:
 - **Anglicanism/Episcopalianism:** Retains some Catholic traditions but emphasizes the authority of Scripture.
 - **Lutheranism:** Founded by Martin Luther, emphasizing justification by faith.

- **Calvinism/Reformed:** Emphasizes God's sovereignty and predestination.
- **Baptist:** Emphasizes believer's baptism and congregational autonomy.
- **Methodism:** Founded by John Wesley, emphasizing personal holiness and social action.
- **Pentecostalism:** Emphasizes the gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues.

Key Differences:

- **Authority:**
 - Catholicism: Pope and Church tradition.
 - Orthodoxy: Tradition and councils.
 - Protestantism: Bible alone.
- **Sacraments:**
 - Variations in the number and interpretation of sacraments.
- **Theology:**
 - Differences in doctrines such as the procession of the Holy Spirit, predestination, and the role of good works.
- **Church Governance:**
 - Hierarchical (Catholicism), collegial (Orthodoxy), and congregational (some Protestant denominations).

Christian Scriptures

Christian literature is incredibly vast, spanning centuries and encompassing a wide range of genres. Here's a breakdown of key categories and influential works:

1. The Bible:

This is the foundational text of Christianity, comprising the Old Testament (shared with Judaism) and the New Testament. The Old Testament was primarily written in Hebrew, with some portions in Aramaic, and the New Testament was written in Koine Greek. Variations exist in ancient Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek manuscripts.

- The Old Testament: Contains books of law, history, prophecy, and wisdom.
- The New Testament: Focuses on the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, as well as the early Christian church.
- It is important to understand that there are different versions of the Bible (translated in English) that differ between different denominations.
 - **King James Version (KJV)** - A word-for-word translation
 - **New International Version (NIV)** - balance between word-for-word and thought-for-thought approaches
 - **New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)** - emphasizes accuracy and inclusivity
 - **English Standard Version (ESV)** - emphasizes word-for-word accuracy
 - **New American Standard Bible (NASB)** - A very literal word for word translation
 - **New Living Translation (NLT)** - A thought-for-thought translation that aims for clarity and readability.

2. Theological and Philosophical Works:

- **"Confessions" by Augustine of Hippo:** A classic autobiographical work exploring faith, sin, and redemption.
- **"Summa Theologica" by Thomas Aquinas:** A comprehensive theological treatise that shaped Catholic doctrine.

- **"Institutes of the Christian Religion" by John Calvin:** A foundational text of Reformed theology.
- **"Mere Christianity" by C.S. Lewis:** A popular apologetic work that defends the Christian faith.

3. Devotional and Spiritual Literature:

- **"The Imitation of Christ" by Thomas à Kempis:** A classic devotional text emphasizing spiritual discipline.
- **"The Cloud of Unknowing" (anonymous):** A mystical work focusing on contemplative prayer.
- Other many books of daily devotionals, and prayer books.

4. Historical and Biographical Works:

- Biographies of Jesus Christ, saints, and influential Christian figures.
- Church history books that trace the development of Christianity.

5. Christian Fiction:

- **"The Chronicles of Narnia" by C.S. Lewis:** A beloved series of allegorical fantasy novels.
- **"The Pilgrim's Progress" by John Bunyan:** An allegorical tale of a Christian's journey to heaven.

Versions of Bible

The Bible, while a single collection of books, exists in numerous versions due to variations in:

- **Original Languages:**
 - The Old Testament was primarily written in Hebrew, with some portions in Aramaic.
 - The New Testament was written in Koine Greek.
- **Manuscript Variations:**
 - Ancient manuscripts, being hand-copied, contain minor variations.
- **Translation Philosophy:**
 - Translators make choices about how to render the original languages, leading to different approaches:
 - **Word-for-word (formal equivalence):** Attempts to translate each word as literally as possible.
 - **Thought-for-thought (dynamic equivalence):** Focuses on conveying the meaning of the original text, even if it means using different words.
 - **Paraphrase:** Expresses the meaning of the text in contemporary language.

Here are some of the most well-known English Bible versions:

- **King James Version (KJV):**
 - A 17th-century translation known for its poetic language.
 - A word-for-word translation.
 - Though beloved, its archaic language can be challenging for modern readers.
- **New International Version (NIV):**
 - A popular modern translation that aims for a balance between word-for-word and thought-for-thought approaches.
 - Widely used in evangelical churches.
- **New Revised Standard Version (NRSV):**
 - A scholarly translation that emphasizes accuracy and inclusivity.
 - Often used in academic and mainline Protestant settings.
- **English Standard Version (ESV):**
 - A relatively recent translation that emphasizes word-for-word accuracy.

- Popular in conservative evangelical circles.
- **New American Standard Bible (NASB):**
 - A very literal word for word translation.
- **New Living Translation (NLT):**
 - A thought-for-thought translation that aims for clarity and readability.
 - Easy to understand, but some scholars consider it less precise.

A Summary of Concept of God, Purpose of Life, Ritual and Spiritual Practices in Christianity:

Concept of God:

- God is absolutely one, indivisible, incorporeal, and eternal, the sole creator and sustainer of the universe who is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, yet also intimately involved in the world and the lives of humanity.
- God is understood as the one and only God, eternally existing as a Trinity: Father, Son (Jesus Christ), and Holy Spirit, three distinct persons yet one in essence, nature, power, and glory.
- This Triune God is the creator and sustainer of the universe, all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-loving
- God revealed Himself most fully through the incarnation of the Son, Jesus Christ, who lived, died, and rose again to reconcile humanity to God, and continues to work through the Holy Spirit to guide, comfort, and empower believers towards salvation and a relationship with the divine.

Purpose of Life:

- Believers in Jesus Christ go to Heaven to be with God, a state of eternal peace and joy.
- Those who do not believe face eternal separation from God in Hell, a place of suffering.
- A central tenet is the future resurrection of the body, where believers will receive glorified bodies in a new heaven and a new earth, signifying a renewed creation.
- Some denominations also believe in Purgatory as an intermediate state for purification of souls of sinners before going to heaven.

Ritual and Spiritual Practices:

- Rituals and spiritual practices center around prayer (individual and communal), Bible study and reflection, regular worship services involving hymns, sermons, and often liturgical elements, and
- Observance of key sacraments such as Baptism (initiation) and Holy Communion (remembrance of Christ's sacrifice).
- Many Christians also engage in practices like fasting, meditation, acts of service and charity, and participation in church communities for fellowship and spiritual growth, all aimed at deepening their relationship with God and living according to Christian teaching.

Chapter 6.7: Deen-al-Islam

Islam has played one of the most vital roles as a religion, and has significantly influenced the world. For centuries, so-called Muslims have been among the primary contributors to religious conflicts, particularly by imposing their religious perspectives on others. That's why it is very important and essential to deeply understand Islam to uncover the truth and validity of these conflicts caused by the so-called Muslims scholars, rulers, and militant groups.

The religion of Islam, same as Christianity, acknowledges the same God of Judaism and all the previous prophets including Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad as the last prophet of God. It also acknowledges that previous Prophets were given divine books and scriptures.

Five Foundational Concepts of Islam:

Here are the five key foundations and concepts of Islam, which are directly derived from the Quran.

Allah (God):

- **One and Unique:** Absolutely singular, without partners or equals.
- **Eternal:** Without beginning or end.
- **Independent (As-Samad):** Not in need of anything, but all are in need of Him.
- **The Creator:** Creator of everything from nothing.
- **The Sustainer:** Upholds and maintains all existence.
- **The Originator, the Initiator (Al-Mubdi')**: The one who starts creation.
- **The Fashioner (Al-Bari')**: The Fashioner, or the Maker, or the Producer, implies bringing forth creation with order and distinction.
- **The Restorer or the Reproducer (Al-Mu'eed)**: Recreator or renewer (from death and destruction).
- **All-Powerful:** Capable of doing all things.
- **All-Knowing (Omniscient):** Possesses perfect and comprehensive knowledge.
- **All-Hearing:** Hears all things.
- **All-Seeing:** Sees all things.
- **Transcendent (Beyond Creation):** Not limited by or dependent on His creation.
- **Immanent (Near to Creation):** encompasses all things.

Aakhirat (Afterlife/Hereafter):

- This is an eternal life after our death in this world.
- That life will resemble this world, but be far better, peaceful, joyful, and free from suffering—exactly as we desire a life to be. It would be a blessing and rewards for those who follow the guidance from God.
- Once entered, people will never desire to come out of it.
- As for those, who ignore or deny the guidance from God, out of arrogance, will face suffering in the afterlife, which will be similar to or even worse than the hardships and pain in this world.
- The severity of their suffering will depend on the nature and extent of their wrongdoings.

Malaikah (Angels):

- God has created angels as powerful beings assigned to carry out specific tasks.
- There are different angels with different natures, like some have consciousness, kind of similar to human beings, others are robotic in nature.
- Since they are not part of the creation of this universe, they are not subject to its laws.
- Unlike beings created within our universe, they do not experience aging or decay.
- Their exact nature, as well as the extent of their power and capabilities, is beyond human perception.

- While they can interact with other creations, they generally remain invisible to us, however, they can appear in physical forms as well whenever required.

Quran (Divine Revelation):

- The Quran, as claimed, is the divine book of guidance revealed by God to Prophet Muhammad.
- It is the only book the Prophet handed over to his followers and has been preserved to this day through both written copies and oral transmission.
- Remarkably, millions of people have memorized the entire Quran—approximately 600 pages—for centuries.
- What makes it unique among all divine books is that it contains only the direct statements of God, with no personal interpretations or explanations from anyone, not even the Prophet himself.

Nabi and Rasool (Prophets and Messengers):

- Prophets (Nabi) are the chosen people from human beings, who serve as intermediaries between God and humanity.
- They are typically individuals who claim to have received communication or revelation directly from God or through His angel, appointed as His messenger.
- The prophets who receive revelations as a complete book of guidance are titled as "Rasool" meaning the messenger of God.

The Word “Allah” not a Personal Name of God:

Some people believe “Allah” is the word for His personal name, and that’s why they insist on using “Allah” as the only word to refer to God, and do not like to use any other word of any other language for God. Let’s understand this word in detail:

The word “Allah” used to refer to God apparently comes from the same root the Eloah comes from (The word meaning God in Hebrew language). It’s important to understand that languages evolve, and words can take on different meanings and forms over time. Here are more details on this:

- There are acknowledged linguistic similarities between Hebrew and Arabic, both being Semitic languages.
- Therefore, it’s plausible that there are shared roots between these words.
- The root “lh” is present in all of them. This root, in semitic languages, relates to divinity.
- It is generally accepted that the Arabic "ilah" and the Hebrew "Eloah" share a common Semitic root.
- The word “Allah” is the result of merging “al” meaning “the”, with “ilah,” which was used for the Supreme Being in Arabia before the revelation of the Quran.
- Pagans (Polytheists) in Arabia used the word "Ilah" for various figures as deities, who had specific names, like Laat, Manaat, Uzza and others, while they also acknowledged “Allah” as the Supreme God.

Hence, the word “Allah” is not a personal name of God. The Quran also clarifies that God had revealed it in Arabic because it was the language of prophet Muhammad and his nation. Therefore, using the Arabic word “Allah” was meant for the immediate people of Arabia to understand and relate.

Also, the Quran states that we can **call upon Allah, or call upon any of the Best Names**, as all the best names belong to Him, and advises to leave those who practice deviation concerning His names. (supportive verses 12:2, 43:3, 14:4, 59:24, 7:180)

Here are the 99 names of God, excluding the name Allah, mentioned in the Quran, with their meanings:

1. Ar-Rahman (The Most Compassionate)	34. Al-Ghafur (The Forgiving)	67. Al-Ahad (The One)
2. Ar-Rahim (The Most Merciful)	35. Ash-Shakur (The Appreciative)	68. As-Samad (The Eternal)
3. Al-Malik (The King)	36. Al-Aliyy (The Most High)	69. Al-Qadir (The Capable)
4. Al-Quddus (The Most Holy)	37. Al-Kabir (The Grand)	70. Al-Muqtadir (The Powerful)
5. As-Salam (The Source of Peace)	38. Al-Hafiz (The Preserver)	71. Al-Muqaddim (The Advancer)
6. Al-Mu'min (The Inspirer of Faith)	39. Al-Muqit (The Sustainer)	72. Al-Mu'akhkhir (The Delayer)
7. Al-Muhaymin (The Guardian)	40. Al-Hasib (The Reckoner)	73. Al-Awwal (The First)
8. Al-Aziz (The Mighty)	41. Al-Jalil (The Majestic)	74. Al-Akhir (The Last)
9. Al-Jabbar (The Compeller)	42. Al-Karim (The Generous)	75. Az-Zahir (The Manifest)
10. Al-Mutakabbir (The Majestic)	43. Ar-Raqib (The Watchful)	76. Al-Batin (The Hidden)
11. Al-Khaliq (The Creator)	44. Al-Mujib (The Responsive)	77. Al-Wali (The Governor)
12. Al-Bari' (The Originator)	45. Al-Wasi' (The Vast)	78. Al-Muta'ali (The Exalted)
13. Al-Musawwir (The Fashioner)	46. Al-Hakim (The Wise)	79. Al-Barr (The Source of Goodness)
14. Al-Ghaffar (The Forgiver)	47. Al-Wadud (The Loving)	80. At-Tawwab (The Acceptor of Repentance)
15. Al-Qahhar (The Subduer)	48. Al-Majid (The Magnificent)	81. Al-Muntaqim (The Avenger)
16. Al-Wahhab (The Bestower)	49. Al-Ba'ith (The Resurrector)	82. Al-'Afuww (The Pardoner)
17. Ar-Razzaq (The Provider)	50. Ash-Shahid (The Witness)	83. Ar-Ra'uf (The Kind)

18. Al-Fattah (The Opener)	51. Al-Haqq (The Truth)	84. Malik al-Mulk (The Owner of Sovereignty)
19. Al-Alim (The All-Knowing)	52. Al-Wakil (The Trustee)	85. Dhu al-Jalal wa al-Ikram (The Lord of Majesty and Bounty)
20. Al-Qabid (The Constrictor)	53. Al-Qawiyy (The Strong)	86. Al-Muqsit (The Equitable)
21. Al-Basit (The Expander)	54. Al-Matin (The Firm)	87. Al-Jami' (The Gatherer)
22. Al-Khafid (The Abaser)	55. Al-Waliyy (The Protecting Friend)	88. Al-Ghaniyy (The Self-Sufficient)
23. Ar-Rafi' (The Exalter)	56. Al-Hamid (The Praiseworthy)	89. Al-Mughni (The Enricher)
24. Al-Mu'izz (The Honorer)	57. Al-Muhsi (The Accounter)	90. Al-Mani' (The Preventer)
25. Al-Mudhill (The Humiliator)	58. Al-Mubdi' (The Originator)	91. Ad-Darr (The Distresser)
26. As-Sami' (The All-Hearing)	59. Al-Mu'id (The Restorer)	92. An-Nafi' (The Benefiter)
27. Al-Basir (The All-Seeing)	60. Al-Muhyi (The Giver of Life)	93. An-Nur (The Light)
28. Al-Hakam (The Judge)	61. Al-Mumit (The Taker of Life)	94. Al-Hadi (The Guide)
29. Al-Adl (The Just)	62. Al-Hayy (The Ever-Living)	95. Al-Badi' (The Incomparable)
30. Al-Latif (The Subtle One)	63. Al-Qayyum (The Self-Sustaining)	96. Al-Baqi (The Enduring)
31. Al-Khabir (The Aware)	64. Al-Wajid (The Finder)	97. Al-Warith (The Inheritor)
32. Al-Halim (The Forbearing)	65. Al-Majid (The Noble)	98. Ar-Rashid (The Rightly Guided)
33. Al-Azim (The Great One)	66. Al-Wahid (The Unique)	99. As-Sabur (The Patient)

The Word “Islam” and “Muslim” not a name of Religion and Community

The Quran itself indicates that "Islam" and "Muslim" are not proper nouns used as the name of a religion or a community. Instead, they describe a state of submission and obedience to God. Here is more details on this:

The Word "Islam"

- The Arabic word "**Islam**" literally means "**submission**" or "**surrender.**"
- In the **context of religion**, it signifies **submission or surrender to God**, which practically means "**absolute obedience to God.**"
- The Quran uses the term "**Deen-al-Islam**", which literally means "**Religion of absolute obedience.**"
- This practically defines Islam as **the religion in which absolute obedience is given to God.**
- Verse 3:83 indicates that **everything in the universe follows the religion of Islam** (Submission), willingly or by compulsion (just the laws are different).
- Hence "Islam" is not limited to a specific historical community but is a universal principle of submission to God.

The Word "Muslim"

- "**Muslim**" is not a proper noun, rather a **qualifier word**, meaning "**those who surrender to someone.**"
- In the **context of religion**, it signifies **those who surrender to God**, which practically means **someone who absolutely obeys God.**
- In the **Quran**, God commands, "**Be Muslim to God.**" Here, the word "Muslim" describes a state of being rather than a fixed identity.
- The Quran also refers to earlier prophets and righteous individuals as "Muslims," while this is an Arabic word, and it is not found in any previous scriptures.
- This reinforces the idea that "Muslim" is not a proper noun referring to a specific religious identity, rather it is a **descriptor** meaning "**one who surrenders to God.**"

Hence, it signifies that :

- Anyone who has truly surrendered to God and absolutely obeys Him can rightfully claim to be a Muslim.
- No certificate of declaration, identity document, or formal announcement is required—rather, a person's character itself reflects their submission.
- However, if someone wishes to make a public declaration, it remains their personal choice.
- The Quran affirms that submission to God (Islam) has always been the essence of true religion, regardless of language, time, and cultural boundaries.

The Word "Musalman"

- The word "Musalman" is not an Arabic word but a distorted form of "Muslim."
- This term was invented in Persia (Iran) and became widely used in Persian-influenced regions, including South Asia and Central Asia.
- Using this unnecessarily distorted term causes problems in preserving the true essence and meaning of "Muslim."
- It has contributed to shaping "Muslim" as a social or cultural identity, rather than its actual meaning of "one who submits to God".
- The use of "Musalman" has played a role in fading away the core religious significance of being a "Muslim."

The Word “Kafir”

Kafir comes from the word “Kufr” meaning “Rejection of Truth and Obedience.” There are three types of Kufr—

1. Rejection of Truth due to Arrogance.

- This category involves individuals who consciously reject the truth due to an inflated sense of self-importance, pride, or superiority.
- They believe they are above being corrected or challenged, and they dismiss any information that contradicts their belief and preconceived notions.
- They often prioritize their own ego and reputation over the pursuit of truth.
- They often display a closed-mindedness that prevents them from considering new evidence or perspectives.
- They are resistant to admitting mistakes or acknowledging alternative viewpoints.
- They may engage in intellectual dishonesty or manipulation to maintain their perceived superiority.
- They may belittle or ridicule or assault those who challenge their beliefs, or teach something which goes against their belief.

2. Rejection of Truth due to Lack of Knowledge.

- This category involves individuals who reject truth due to ignorance, misunderstanding, or a lack of exposure to correct information.
- They may be sincere but misinformed, who often rely on hearsay or tradition without critical examination, or any unreliable sources.
- Unlike the arrogant, these individuals may be open to change if presented with clear, logical, and evidence-based arguments.

3. Reject of Obedience to God.

- This category involves individuals who claim to believe in God, but they consciously ignore God's commands and guidance.
- They may prioritize their own desires, ego, or worldly interests over obedience to God.
- They may rationalize their actions, or deny the consequences of their actions.

Purpose of Creation and Our Life:

This has been the most thought-provoking question of my life. Since we create nothing without a purpose, it is logical that God must have created us with a purpose as well. He would not have created us merely to suffer, and then expect us to find ways to escape that suffering.

I sought answers from people of various religious perspectives, but ultimately I found the satisfactory answer in the Quran:

God’s Purpose of Creation:

1. God, through his wonderful creation, manifests His infinite power and glory to His creations, with the purpose that His creations acknowledge His glory with praise, gratitude and supreme love, although His glory is independent of acknowledgment, as it is evident in the wonders of His creation.
2. All of the creation—both living and non-living—glorifies Him, though we cannot perceive it. (17:44)
3. Everything within the universe obeys God, whether willingly or by compulsion. (3:83)
4. God has granted **free will** to human beings and jinns (another creation somewhat similar to human beings, but invisible to us). This means they have the ability to **choose** whether to **obey Him, acknowledging and believing in His glory, or deny Him altogether.**

Purpose of Our Life in this World:

5. Human beings are the centerpiece of His creation in this world, appointed as successors, granted with the power and ability to utilize its resources and uphold order to the best of their capacity. God encourages us to explore and discover the wonders of His creations.
6. Humans are born with an inherent sense of right and wrong, or good and evil, allowing them to distinguish between good and evil acts even without explicit instruction, and they are also provided with free will to choose any of the two paths.
7. God gave us life in this world to test how righteous we are in our actions based on the intellect, knowledge and wisdom He has granted us, while also allowing us a degree of enjoyment in this life.
8. God expects absolute obedience from us as an obligation, with reverence and a sense of fear (caution and accountability of actions)—recognizing His supreme authority over us.
9. Our actions in this life will determine our success or failure in the afterlife, which will resemble this world, but be far better, peaceful, joyful, and free from suffering, or it will be full of suffering, similar to or even worse than the hardships and pain in this world.
10. We will be able to recognize His true Glory in the afterlife, and then we will truly glorify Him with praise, gratitude, and supreme love for His blessings there for us.

Why Suffering and Hardships in Our Life?

1. When we look at the concept of eternal life, it becomes clear that God wants us to **witness and experience** suffering and hardships in this world so that we can truly appreciate the value of the afterlife, which is free from suffering.
2. Without encountering difficulties and pain, we would never understand the depth of joy, peace, and satisfaction that eternal life offers.
3. **Contrast is essential**—without struggle, we cannot fully grasp the significance of relief, without hardship, we cannot truly cherish ease, and without suffering, we cannot truly realize joy.
4. Also, God subjects us to trials through our own suffering and hardships, and of others as well, to test our patience (Sabr) responsibility (Mas'uliyah), and true dispositions (Akhlaq).

Concept of Life:

The conscious being in this universe is made up of three distinct elements: 1) the physical body, 2) life (the vital force), and 3) the conscious self (the soul). A soul is granted life within a body.

- **The Physical Body (Jism):** This is the tangible, material form that houses the vital force (Hayat) and the conscious self (Nafs/Soul). It is the vessel through which we interact with the physical world.
- **The Life [The Vital Force (Hayat)]:** This is the animating principle that sustains the body's biological functions. It is the essence of physical life, enabling growth, movement, and bodily processes.
- **The Conscious Self (Soul/Nafs):** Consciousness Self is a unique, divine creation, not an emergent property, and it is distinct from matter. This is the seat of consciousness, intellect, emotions, and will. It is the "I" that experiences, reasons, and makes choices. When we refer to "ourselves," we are essentially referring to this conscious self. Every soul is unique and distinct from others. Moreover, different species possess different types of souls (consciousness), each with varying capabilities.
- **Relationship:** The physical body, imbued with the vital force, serves as the instrument through which the conscious self expresses itself, and navigates existence. The conscious self utilizes the body's functions and directs our actions.
- **Transcendence of the Soul:** The conscious self (Nafs/Soul) is not a product of the physical universe. It is of a different, transcendent order, potentially originating from beyond this material realm.

- **Death:** Death signifies the end of the vital force (Hayat) within the physical body. It marks the permanent separation of the conscious self from its physical vessel, but not the end of the existence of the conscious self (Soul/Nafs) itself.
- **Divine Intervention:** God's intervention in our lives can manifest through various means:
 - **Consciousness:** Direct influence upon our inner awareness and understanding through divine inspiration.
 - **Angelic Agency:** Mediation through powerful angelic beings, who receive and carry out divine commands in real time.
 - **Natural Laws:** Potential manipulation of natural laws to bring about intended events.
 - **Issue of Causality:** Angelic force and divine manipulation of natural laws address the issue of causality within unnatural phenomena and miraculous events.

Is the Theory of Evolution against the Quran?

The theory of evolution does not go against the Quran, rather, it supports the concept of evolution. The reason I am saying this because the Quran indicates that:

- Adam was not the first human being, rather, there have been humans already on this earth before Adam, but they were not as perfect as today, in terms of appearance, intellect, ability of moral reasoning, and consciousness.
- There had been too much bloodshed on this earth before Adam.
- Humans have evolved from a combination of water and soil.
- All living beings have evolved from water. It does not contradict with the above point, rather, it means that water is the primary ingredient, which was mixed with soil to begin life on this earth.
- All other living beings are like human beings with shared similarities, hinting at the common origin of all the living beings.
- Humans at some stage were not worthy of mention as they are today.
- Human beings have gone through evolution and different stages with different capabilities, like the level of intellect, and moral reasoning, and consciousness.
- Adam was the first kind of perfect man with completely fully developed intellect, morality, and consciousness.
- Adam was more like the humans on this earth, but brought up not on different place, other than this earth, and his development was under special control of God
- The humans on earth might be from Adam's progeny as well as from other human beings.
- The speciality of Adam as mentioned in the Quran is knowledge and intellect that we humans possess today, and which makes us different from other living beings on this earth.
- It is also possible that when Adam came there might be very little number of humans because of too much bloodshed, hence most of the human beings might be from the pregnancy of Adam, as we see that their level of consciousness and intellect was not of that label as that of the people from Adams family but with the mixing of genes from Adams family and others there have been of course evolution genetic evolution

Shaitan (Satan/The Devil):

God created an angel like being, namely Iblis, who is very powerful, somewhat like angels. He is also referred as Shaitan (the Devil) due to his several negative characteristics. Here's a breakdown:

- **Arrogance and Pride:**
Shaitan's primary characteristic is his arrogance, which led to his refusal to obey God's command. (7:12-13)
- **Deception and Misguidance:**
Shaitan is described as a master of deception, who seeks to mislead humans from the right path. (4:119)
- **Whispering and Suggesting Evil:**

Shaitan works by whispering evil suggestions into the hearts of humans, tempting them to sin and aggression. (114:4-5)

- **Enemy of Mankind:**
Shaitan is described as a clear and open enemy of humanity, constantly striving to lead them astray, causing failure and destruction in this world as well as in the afterlife. (12:5)
- **Inciting Conflict and Discord:**
Shaitan seeks to sow discord and animosity among people, turning them against each other. (5:91)
- **Denial of Accountability:**
Shaitan will deny any accountability on the day of judgement, and will say that he only whispered to people, and they made the choice to follow him. (14:22)

These characteristics highlight Shaitan's role as a tempter, deceiver, and enemy of humanity, constantly working to lead them to the wrong path.

Shaitan, through his power of inspiration, uses the human traits of like and dislike, desire and anger, to make them think negatively and takes them to an extreme level. This explains the reason for people's negative, aggressive and destructive behaviour.

God guides Whom He wills, and leads Astray Whom He wills?

Let's have a look at the below verses:

- God leads astray whom He wills and guides whom He wills. (14:4)
- God clarifies that He does not lead anyone astray, except those who are the defiantly disobedient. (2:26)

Actually, these kinds of verses were specifically addressing particular people from disbelievers and hypocrites of that time, who were the enemies of the Prophet and his followers, and their transgression was of extreme level.

Everyone and everything is under DIVINE RULE in every aspect of existence and life, and hence, God does have the control to guide anyone or lead anyone astray, but He does not do injustice to anyone.

Two Types of Guidance: There are two types of guidance from God–

1. **Knowledge:** It is commonly available to everyone through divine books and innate ability of moral reasoning.
2. **Divine Intervention:** It is a blessing from God, and includes divine help through direct inspiration to our consciousness as a reminder and warning of consequences, and also through other means of prevention from going astray.

Negative Inspiration:

There is also a source of negative inspiration which is common with everyone, and that is from **Shaitan**. He misleads people by invoking inspiration of negative thoughts, desire and anger, or just making them heedless. He also misleads people through other people He and also through his allies of humans and jinns (those who are like-minded and his easy targets).

Guides Whom He wills:

Here the guidance means helping people through divine intervention. God helps them because such people do follow the guidance from God, and usually do not choose the wrong path. They might not be doing it with an intention to disobey God, or they might be a victim of conspiracy, which could lead them to adverse consequences.

Leads Astray Whom He wills:

Leading astray means God does not help them through divine intervention in terms of guidance, rather, gives them the opportunity to do what they desire, leaving them completely up to their own choices and in the hands of Shaitan, that ultimately leads them towards adverse consequences, and failure, in real sense. God does this with those who they have intentionally chosen to disobey God even after having knowledge, and they are used to it.

Ritual and Spiritual Practices:

As we discussed earlier, rituals and spiritual practices foster a connection with God and cultivate inner peace, and help us to maintain a balance between fulfilling our ultimate purpose and engaging in worldly affairs. Here are the list of ritual and practices prescribed in Islam:

Salat (Prayer):

- Salat is an obligatory practice in Islam, which enables individuals to maintain a constant connection with God, serves as a reminder of our purpose of life, and helps purify the heart by fostering mindfulness, humility, and spiritual discipline.
- It combines **glorification of God, supplication to Him, and a degree of meditation and physical exercise**.
- It primarily serves as a reminder of our moral duties and ultimate purpose in life, strengthening our connection with God.
- The meditation aspect, along with the remembrance of God and reflection on our purpose, contributes to **mental well-being**.
- Additionally, the physical movements involved provide a modest yet **beneficial form of exercise**, aiding overall health and well-being.
- At least five Salats a day are obligatory for every adult individual, at dawn (Fajr), afternoon (Dhuhr), evening (Asr), sunset (Maghrib), and early night (Isha). Dhuhr and Asr prayers can also be performed as combined at any time of the two periods, as well as Maghrib and Isha prayers can also be performed as combined at any time of the two periods. It takes 5-10 minutes for each prayer.
- Considering its spiritual, mental, and physical benefits, it is truly an important practice for maintaining a **balanced and disciplined life**.
- **Congregational Salat** serves as a **symbol of local unity and equality**, reinforcing brotherhood and humility within societies by bringing people of all backgrounds together in daily worship.
- The Quran states that **Salat restrains one from immorality and wrongdoing** (29:45). This means that sincere and mindful prayer, when performed with true understanding and dedication, helps individuals stay away from sinful and harmful actions by constantly reminding them of their moral responsibilities and connection with God.

Zakat (Charity):

- Zakat is an obligatory act of charity, requiring one to give **at least 2.5% of their accumulated wealth annually** to those in need.
- The Quran emphasizes its role in **purifying wealth** and **promoting social justice**, ensuring the fair distribution of resources and reducing economic disparity. (9:103)
- By mandating Zakat, Islam encourages **compassion, financial responsibility, and a balanced economic system** where the well-off support the less fortunate, fostering a sense of unity and care in society.

Sawm (Fasting):

- Sawm is basically to abstain from food, drink or smoking from dawn to sunset.

- This practice cultivates self-discipline, empathy for the less fortunate, and spiritual reflection.
- **The Quran states that Sawm is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may attain Taqwa- meaning a sense of accountability and righteousness. (2:183)**
- This verse highlights that fasting is not just about abstaining from food and drink but is meant to develop self-discipline, mindfulness of God, and a sense of accountability and righteousness.

Hajj (Pilgrimage):

- Hajj is an obligatory pilgrimage for Muslims who are physically and financially capable, required to be performed **at least once in a lifetime**.
- While Salat is a symbol of local unity and equality societies, Hajj serves as a **symbol of global unity and equality**, bringing together people from all over the world, regardless of race, nationality, or status, in a shared act of worship and submission to God.
- It also reminds us of the **temporary nature of worldly life**, cultivates **humility within us**, and reinforces our **devotion to God** by detaching us from material possessions and societal distinctions. It serves as a profound spiritual journey that strengthens our faith in God and commitment to righteousness.
- Hajj was established as a practice after Prophet Abraham, which was continued by Prophet Muhammad, and serves as a commemoration of his (Prophet Abraham's) exceptional devotion and obedience to God.

The Quran, and its Perspective on Religion and Life:

The Quran is partly simple and clear, while also containing complex verses that require deep reflection and interpretation. This structure allows it to address multiple audiences with varying levels of knowledge and intellect.

- The Quran contains a comprehensive guide, integrating divine commands (both legal and moral directives), profound wisdom, and illuminating knowledge.
- It cultivates a direct connection with God by teaching the art of glorification of God and supplication to Him.
- It delivers timeless lessons through the historical narratives of past prophets and peoples.
- The guidance includes:
 - General principles and directives applicable across all eras.
 - Context-based directives specific to the era of Prophet Muhammad, addressing the contemporary people and situations.
 - Some of these directives were relevant only to that time and situation.
 - Some remain relevant for all time.

Let's explore further from the Quran to expand our understanding of perspective of religion and the guidance for life in it:

Opening of the Quran:

After its first chapter, which serves as a daily prayer, glorifying God and shaping our perspective about Him and our purpose in life, the Quran begins its next chapter with the declaration:

"That book—which is) free from doubt—is a guidance for the Muttaqeen."

Guidance for Muttaqeen:

The word "Muttaqeen" essentially refers to **those who have Taqwa—meaning fear**. There is another word "**Khauf**" used for fear which signifies "Emotional State of Panic and Distress," while **Taqwa** signifies "Constant Sense of Caution and Accountability," while Taqwa signifies a deeper

and constant sense of accountability, mindfulness and caution of the outcome of our actions and decisions that may cause problems, such as:

- Suffering and Pain
- Disgrace
- Loss
- Displeasing and Enraging Others.

Those who have no sense of caution and accountability are not the audience of the Quran, and it is not a guidance for them.

Free from Doubt and Error:

Here the free from doubt encompasses all kinds of doubt including:

- **Doubt about its divine origin**—There should be no doubt in the divine origin of the book.
- **Doubt about authenticity and integrity**—There should be no doubt about whether the book has been preserved unchanged since its revelation.
- **Doubt about Error**—There should be no error and inconsistency in the guidance and information in it.

Thus, the Quran, referring to itself, establishes a clear criterion: true guidance (leading to truth and success) must come from a book that is completely free from doubt—doubt about its divine origin, authenticity, integrity, and free from errors or inconsistencies.

Furthermore, it clarifies that this guidance is relevant and meaningful only to those who possess a sense of fear and accountability—those who are mindful and cautious of consequences and strive to make the right choices in life.

Further Clarification of this verse within the Quran:

- In **verse 15:9**, God declared that He will protect the Quran, and the Quran is preserved till today
- In **verse 4:82**, “Then do they not reflect upon the Quran? If it had been from [any] other than God, they would have found within it much contradiction.
- In **verse 10:37**, God declares that it was not [possible] for this Quran to be produced by (someone) other than God, and [it is] a confirmation of what was before it and a detailed explanation of the Scripture, wherein there is no doubt, (it is) from the Lord of the worlds.
- In **verse 4:174**, God states “O mankind, there has come to you a conclusive proof from your Lord, and We have sent down to you a clear light.”

Quran a Clear Book of Guidance:

- The **Quran describes its own nature** as accessible and providing clear guidance.
- Many verses emphasize this clarity, such as 5:15, 12:1, 27:1, 26:2, and 43:2.
- These verses highlight that the Quran's message is presented in a way understandable to all.
- God declares the **Quran as light**, guiding humanity.
- The Quran states that: (3:7)
 - Some verses have **clear and specific meanings**—these are the "foundation of the Book" and form its core message.
 - Some verses have **unspecific meanings**, and those with deviation in their hearts seek to interpret them for discord.
 - It is only God who knows their true interpretation (3:7).
- This implies that essential guidance for human beings is always clear and specific, requiring no interpretation, hence only these clear verses serve as the criteria for judgment.
- Also, it is not prohibited by God to interpret the verses which have unspecific meaning, but no one can compel others to believe in his/her interpretation, and should not cause divisions in people.

Quran as a Criterion and Confirmation of Truth (Furqan):

Supporting verses- 4:174, 5:48, 26:196-197, 3:3-4, 10:37, 17:81, 3:78, 2:79.

- The Quran acknowledges that divine truth was revealed before its own revelation.
- Previous scriptures have been subject to human alteration or have become mixed with falsehood.
- The Quran's role is to confirm and clarify the original truth and to distinguish it from falsehood.
- This establishes the Quran as a "Criterion" over previous scriptures, providing a standard for validating truth.
- God also states that He will ultimately decide concerning the matters over which people differ and will reveal the truth, as all of humanity will return to Him.
- Therefore, we should avoid engaging in disputes over matters which only God can decide.

Different Rules and Rituals for Different Times and Nations:

Supporting verses- 5:48, 22:67

- God prescribed different laws and rituals to different people, tailored to their specific times and circumstances.
- Their test was in what was given to them, and we should not dispute over these differences.
- Instead of arguing, we should race towards all that is good.
- The priority should be inviting people to believe in God rather than debating over differences in rules and rituals.
- God assures Prophet Muhammad (and others as well) that he is upon straight guidance, so he (and others as well) should not worry about these variations.

Completion of the Religion on Quran:

The Quran declares that Prophet Muhammad is the last Prophet and that the religion has been perfected and completed (5:3, 33:40).

This indicates that:

- No Further Divine Guidance Is Needed – Humanity has now reached a stage where no new religious guidance will be required, as sufficient guidance has already been provided by God.
- No More Authenticity or Integrity Issues – The Quran, as the final book of guidance and criterion, will be preserved, ensuring no future dilemma regarding authenticity or integrity.
- Self-Sufficiency in Religious Knowledge – With the completion of revelation, human beings are expected to rely on the Quran alone for religious guidance, without the need for any other prophets or scriptures and resources. Human beings can now resolve all the matters and overcome any confusion using their intellect and the available divine guidance.

Importance of Intellect (Aql):

In our philosophical concepts, humans who fail to use their intellect and critical thinking skills are likened to animals that operate primarily on instinct or imitation, like sheep, monkeys, donkeys, etc. The same concept is found in the Quran as well, emphasizing the importance of utilizing intellect and critical thinking as a defining characteristic of human beings.

In the Quran, God states that those who do not use their intellect (Aql), are like livestock, or even worse. He criticises those who follow traditions blindly just because they found their forefathers on it. (7:179, 25:44, 2:170)

In verse 10:100, God states "And it is not for a soul to believe except by permission of God, and He places defilement upon those who do not use reason."

Important Considerations:

- The Quran's emphasis on intellect is not intended to be derogatory towards animals. Rather it is to raise the status of humans, and their responsibilities.
- The analogy to animals highlights the loss of human potential when intellect is neglected.
- The Quran encourages critical thinking and independent reasoning, not blind obedience.

Righteousness is Required for Success, not just Belief:

The consistent theme throughout the Quran frequently pairs belief (iman) with righteous deeds (amal salih) as the pathway to divine rewards, indicating their inseparable connection.

Supporting Verses:

- "And whoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female, while being a believer - those will enter Paradise and will not be wronged [even as much as] the speck on a date seed." (4:124)
- "Indeed, those who have believed and done righteous deeds - for them are the Gardens of Paradise, wherein they will abide eternally, not desiring from them any transfer." (18:107)
- "Indeed, those who believed, and those who were Jews and Christians and Sabeans, whoever believed in God and the Afterlife and did righteous deeds - for them will be their reward with their Lord, and no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve." (2:62)

Note:

Disobeying God's commands without a valid reason is an act against righteousness, just as disobeying one's father without cause is a wrongful act.

Moral Principles and Duties Mentioned in the Quran:

Justice, Kindness, Honesty, Forgiveness, Patience (Sabr), Respect for Parents (Birr al-Walidayn), Keeping Promises (Wafa' bil-'Ahd), Charity (Zakah/Sadaqah), Humility (Tawadu'), Truthfulness (Sidq), Moderation (Wasatiyyah), Trustworthiness (Amanah), Protection of the weak, Respect for human life, Environmental Responsibility, Keeping good relations with relatives (Silat ar-Rahim), Generosity (Infaq), Brotherhood/Sisterhood (Ukhuwwah), Consultation (Shura), Fulfilling Contracts (Awfa Bil-Uqud), Advising towards Truth and Righteousness, Forbearance (Hilm), Spending on relatives, orphans, needy and travellers, etc.

How to Treat Enemies and Evil People:

God states "And do not let the hatred of a people for having obstructed you from al-Masjid al-Ḥarām lead you to transgress. And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression". (5:2)

Other Rules and Laws:

1. Prayer, 2. Fasting, 3. Pilgrimage, 4. Purity Laws, 6. Charity, 7. Dietary Laws, 8. Marriage and Divorce, 9. Inheritance Laws, 10. Criminal and Civil Laws, 11. Rules of Warfare.

Note: We are planning to write another book in which we will cover all the rules and rituals given in the Quran along with the details of the way Prophet Muhammad practiced it, as reported and recorded by different people from both Shia and Sunni sects.

Only Five Categories of Forbidden Acts (Haram A'amal):

"Say, "Who has forbidden the adornment of God which He has produced for His servants and the good provisions?" ... Say, "My Lord has only forbidden unlawful intimate relationships—whether apparent or concealed—, and sin, and oppression without right, and that you associate with God—that for which He has not sent down authority—, and that you say about God that which you do not know." (7:33)

1. Unlawful Intimate Relationship - whether Apparent or Concealed

- This encompasses all forms of unlawful sexual conduct, whether committed openly or secretly.
- It includes adultery, fornication, and any sexual activity outside of a lawful marital relationship.
- It also includes behaviors that lead to these actions.

2. Sins (Wrongful/Evil Acts)

- This term encompasses all forms of act which are morally wrong and evil, and that which God has declared as sin.
- It includes both outward actions and inward attitudes, such as pride, envy, malice, dishonesty, robbery, etc.
- The Quran doesn't introduce entirely new moral concepts. Instead, it reaffirms and clarifies the moral principles that humans intuitively recognize.
- God states that He will forgive our minor sins if we avoid major sins and do righteous deeds, which indicates that there are major sins and minor sins, and all transgressions do not carry the same weight.
- Humans also naturally categorize mistakes or wrongdoings as minor or major, reflecting a universal sense of moral gradation.
- **Some Example of Inward Evil Actions:**
Pride and Arrogance (Kibr), Envy (Hasad), Malice (Hiqd), Dishonesty (Nifaq), Hatred (Karah), Spite (Ghill), Selfishness (Ananiyah), Suspicion (Su' al-Zann), etc.
- **Some Example of Outward Evil Actions:**
Theft and Robbery, Fraud and Deception, Lying, Consumption of Forbidden Substances (like alcohols and drugs), Breaking Promises and Contracts, Backbiting and Slander, Spreading False Rumors, Destruction of Property, Consuming Interest (Riba), Neglecting of Duties, Abuse of Power, Discrimination, Cheating, Disrespecting, Abusive Language, Breaking Family Ties, Wasting Natural Resources, Wasting Time and Money, etc.

3. Oppression without Right:

- This encompasses all forms of unjust behavior against someone, including violence, exploitation, and abuse of power.
- It includes any action that violates the rights of others or infringes upon their dignity.
- This includes physical, verbal, and financial oppression.

4. Associating Others With God:

- It refers to the association (shirk) of partners with God in divine powers, and worshipping them alongside God.
- Verse 32.4 and many others, indicates God alone is the King of the universe, and there is no protector or intercessor for us besides Him (against natural orders and disasters), meaning no one else except God can control natural order (law) of the universe, and no one except He can take requests to save us from natural orders and disasters.
- Shirk is the worst kind of wrongful action declared by God, because:
 - God's ultimate purpose of creation is that all His creation should glorify Him, acknowledging His sole sovereignty as Creator, Sustainer, and Master of everyone and everything. Hence no one except God can expect glorification from his creations, and no one except God has the right to be worshipped.

- There is no reason for people to commit Shirk, as they do it solely as a choice, not as a requirement, unlike other sins that have at least some relevant reasons. It's all about going against our intellect and guidance from God.
- After power, it is the compassion and mercy that are the most significant attributes of God, and He is All-Hearings All-Seeing and All-Knowing, hence seeking someone else (as partner of God), other than Him to listen to you and help you is against the divine dignity of God. However, He may still help you because of His compassion and mercy.
- This concept is readily understood through human analogy: just as a father, we cannot accept others as partner fathers of our children, or we cannot allow our elder son to assume your paternal role over your other children. Not even a single person will ever like this being in any of the roles we mentioned, then, how come we expect God to bear this, or even like this.
- Scientific discovery has already suggested that the functioning of the universe is governed by four fundamental forces originating from a singular, unified source. This scientific perspective aligns with the theological concept of God's oneness, reinforcing the notion that associating multiple sources of power or influence with God to control the universe contradicts both divine revelation and empirical observation.

5. Saying About God What You Do Not Know:

- This refers to speaking about God without knowledge, making false claims about God's attributes, laws, or will.
- This is a prohibition against making up things about God, and believing such things without any evidence of revelation from God.
- It does not mean that interpretation of verses is prohibited, rather, it means talking about something which God has not revealed at all.
- Also, it is NOT prohibited to say something about God which is reported by someone, who claims to have heard it from prophets. But believing in that report is not compulsory for other people.

Music, Beard, Attires, Dress Code, and Hijab (Parda):

As we discussed earlier, in verse 7:33, the Quran explicitly mentions just the five categories of acts which are prohibited (Haram), it nowhere speaks about beard. Rather, the verse 49:13, 2:177 and other verses signify that it is the righteousness that gives you success and makes you noble in the sight of God. No person on this earth knows that keeping a beard is an act of righteousness, however, the beard has been considered a sign of maturity and nobility throughout history, but only when combined with righteousness.

Music:

- The Quran does not specifically mention anything about music.
- Generally anything that leads you towards sin and other prohibited acts, or leads you to disobey God should be avoided.
- Like many other things, some types of music, and those associated with such kinds of music influence people negatively, leading them towards immorality, immodesty or unlawful intimate relationships.
- Hence, the kinds of music, and the people associated with it, that lead to wrongful acts, should be avoided.

Beard:

- As discussed earlier, verse 7:33 explicitly mentions only five categories of acts that are prohibited (Haram) in the Quran.

- The Quran nowhere speaks about the beard as a religious obligation, rather, verses 49:13, 2:177, and others emphasize that righteousness is what grants success and nobility in the sight of God.
- No one on earth knows for certain that keeping a beard is an act of righteousness.
- Throughout history, the beard has been regarded as a sign of maturity and nobility—but only when combined with righteousness.

Attires and Dress Code:

- The Quran addresses the concept of modest dress for both men and women, emphasizing principles rather than prescribing specific garments.
- Verse **7:26** highlights the dual purpose of clothing: to cover private areas and to serve as adornment. It also emphasizes that the "Clothing of Taqwa" is the best form of attire. We already discussed the meaning of Taqwa. Here "Clothing of Taqwa" indicates to avoid excessive displays of adornment to attract undue attention.
- Verse **24:30-31** instructs men and women to lower their gaze and guard their private parts. For women, it also instructs them to draw their head coverings over their chests.

Hijab (Parda):

Verses **33:58-60** indicate that the instruction for Hijab was given in response to a specific, well-known contextual situation as a solution, rather than as a declaration that going out without Hijab is an inherently sinful or prohibited act. The following verses will provide further clarity on this matter.

- "And those who harm believing men and believing women for [something] other than what they have earned [i.e., deserved] have certainly borne upon themselves a slander and manifest sin." (33:58)
- "O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves of their outer garments. That is more suitable that they will be known and not be abused. And ever is God Forgiving and Merciful." (33:58)
- "If the hypocrites and those in whose hearts is disease, and those who spread rumors in al-Madīnah do not cease, We will surely make you rise against them; then they will not remain your neighbors therein except for a little." (33:60)

Remember:

Any act that is intended to lead or attract to a sinful or prohibited act is itself prohibited.

Is Religion of Islam the only religion accepted by God?

God explicitly declares in the Quran that Islam is the only religion He accepts. Let's have a look at the below verses which clearly indicate this:

- **Verse 3:19** "Indeed, the religion in the sight of God is Islam."
- **Verse 3:85:** "And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers."
- **Verse 3:83:** "So do they seek besides the religion of God, while to Him has submitted whatever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly?"

As explained earlier, the words "**Islam**" and "**Muslim**" are not names of a religion or a community; rather, they describe a religion and a person.

- God mandates us to have EIMAN (Belief), and follow ISLAM, or deen-al-islam (Absolute Obedience of His Laws).
- RELIGION of islam includes RIGHTEOUSNESS as well as ADDITIONAL OBLIGATIONS and PROHIBITIONS. (The latter two aspects are actually parts of righteousness, but we need to put them separately them for better understanding)
- Those who selectively follow what they find convenient, acting according to their personal preferences and desires, rather than true obedience to God, cannot be considered Muslims.

- A Muslim's actions and decisions are not influenced by personal moods, circumstances, or biases; rather, they are consistent in **justice, righteousness, modesty and chastity**.
- Unfortunately, millions of people, including so-called Islamic scholars, claim to be Muslims even when they do not follow Islam (absolute obedience to God), which has **distorted the meaning of Islam** and **damaged the credibility of the religion of God to a great extent**.
- They still can claim to be a believer of God, as no one except God knows what people have in their hearts, but, their belief is like a person who recognizes and accepts a man as his father, however, he/she ignores his orders even if there is no reason to do so.

Believing and Following “Hadith” is Obligatory, and Part of Islam?

There are written records of the Prophet Muhammad's practices and sayings, known as Hadith, which were compiled by hundreds of scholars and narrators approximately two centuries after his death.

Let's have a look at the below verses:

“And obey God and His Messenger, and do not dispute and [thus] lose courage and [then] your strength would depart; and be patient. Indeed, God is with the patient.” (8:1)

“And whatever the Messenger has given you - take it; and whatever he has forbidden you - refrain from it.” (59:7)

“Obey God and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. And if you disagree about anything, refer it to God and the Messenger, if you should believe in God and the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for interpretation.” (4:59)

“Unquestionably, His is the creation and the command; blessed is God, Lord of the worlds.” (7:54)

“Command (Hukm) is not but for God. He has commanded that you worship not except Him. That is the correct religion, but most of the people do not know.” (12:40)

“Say, “Who has forbidden the adornment of God which He has produced for His servants and the good provisions?” ... Say, “My Lord has only forbidden unlawful intimate relationships—whether apparent or concealed—, and sin, and oppression without right, and that you associate with God—that for which He has not sent down authority—, and that you say about God that which you do not know.” (7:33)

- No one except God has the authority to legislate universal divine laws of religion, particularly in defining obligations and what is lawful (Halal) and unlawful (Haram).
- The word “ISLAM” refers to obedience to DIRECT COMMANDS from God and His Prophets and Messengers. However, it doesn't mean that God would omit some of the divine commands of obligations (Fardh) and prohibitions (Haram) in His book, and then the Prophet would give hundreds and thousands of people the responsibility to convey those commands to people.
- It would mean different people had taken the responsibility to remember and convey different commands and laws to whomever they want, or they can, because God has omitted those commands and laws in His book of guidance.
- Moreover, it is against the principle of justice to claim that God could omit something unlawful from His book and then punish people for it. Such a claim would be an unjust accusation against God, and it is, of course, against the claims of the Quran about being a CLEAR BOOK of guidance, the CRITERION and a CLEAR LIGHT, as we discussed earlier.
- It is very logical from the human's perspective that additional directives issued by the Messenger of God were specific applications of divine wisdom to the contemporary people, situations, and challenges of that era. These directives, while divinely sanctioned, were tailored to address the unique circumstances of that time, not necessarily permanent aspects of the religion.

- This is actually not a contradiction between the commands in the above verses and the claims of the Quran, as this can be understood by an analogy to a district magistrate or army commander who possesses the authority to make situational decisions, and the immediate audience are required to obey them. They may temporarily prohibit actions that are normally permissible but harmful in the given context, or may mandate actions that are not typically required but beneficial in the present situation, however, their actions and decisions are not supposed to be permanent rules and an amendment to the legislature of the state.
- At one side, God declares the Quran a clear book of guidance, as criterion and clear light, which has around 600 pages. On the other hand, His book refers us to look for His complete guidance in other books as well, which have more than 60 thousand pages.
- Which author will claim his book as clear guidance, and then his book will refer you to another book for complete guidance, which is 100 times bigger than this book.
- And how Hadiths have been gathered and these books have been compiled, that's another story. Not just that, it means you have to depend on hundreds of scholars and narrators in order to get the complete guidance of that CLEAR BOOK of guidance and CRITERION.
- It would be clearly against the Quran, and against human intellect, logic and principle of justice to assume that the Quran does not have a complete list of obligations and prohibitions of the religion of Islam.

Sunnah (Prophet's Way of Practices)

- We certainly have to follow the Prophet Muhammad in practices of the rituals prescribed in the Quran, because NO ONE other than the Prophet would know the WAY OF PERFORMING RITUALS and other practices prescribed in the Quran.
- The way the Prophet performed the rituals and other practices is known as "Sunnah," meaning "Way or Method."
- The Sunnah has been directly transmitted to us through a chain of generations till now. Although everyone learns Sunnah only practically, these have also been recorded in the book of Hadith in the form of narrations.
- It needs to be pointed out here that Hadith is valuable, but it cannot serve as the basis for our judgment and determine our success or failure in the afterlife. As stated earlier, it would be unjust for God to judge people based on sources other than His Book, especially for those not present in the time of His messenger—and God can never be unjust to anyone.
- We should approach Hadith with caution, as the scholars of Hadiths have documented that there are thousands of fabricated narrations in the forms of Hadith.
- The fabrication was a consequence of the presence of hypocrisy, hostility and conspiracy directed towards the Religion and the Messenger of God during his lifetime and subsequent generations.
- There are slight variations in the Sunnah with different sects and schools, however, it doesn't matter at all, as explained earlier. We can learn and follow any of the Sunnah transmitted through a reliable chain.
- While Hadith holds value and can be a source of additional knowledge that can be highly useful in various ways, certain narrations are harmful or misleading. They diminish or weaken the Quran's authority, impact, and significance in our lives, potentially diverting us from core principles of God's true religion.
- Sects within the so-called Muslim community have emerged solely because Hadith was elevated to the status of divine authority, making it part of Islam, and a basis for judgment in the afterlife.
- In case of any doubt of the authenticity of a Sunnah one is practicing, people can consult any well known scholar of Hadith and Sunnah they can rely on as per their knowledge, but people should NEVER associate themselves with any sect.
- Whosoever tries to create a sect in religion, and causes divisions and discord in people cannot be a Muslim, as this is a strictly prohibited act in the Quran. Such people can claim to be a BELIEVER but NOT A MUSLIM.
- ALWAYS REMEMBER that no one can claim that they are on the right Sunnah and others are not, since there are various narrations of Sunnah, and it does not matter, because this

is not something for which people will be punished by God, that's why people should never become part of any sect at any cost on basis of any claim which is a Hadith. People should call themselves a Believer, or a Muslim, but always remember who a Muslim is.

Causing Divisions in the Name of Religion:

- The Quran strongly condemns creating discord and division among people in the name of religion.
- It emphasizes the severity of actions that disrupt social harmony and unity.
- The Quran repeatedly calls for harmony within society as a whole.
- It warns against actions that sow discord and create divisions.
- God warns those who divide religion and form sects, and states that their judgment is upon Him.
- Supporting verses: 6:159, 3:103, 8:1, 6:159

Role of Scholars, and Root Cause of Divisions in Religion:

- The Quran, as the last and final book from God, was revealed to rectify religious division and discord.
- Unfortunately, people claiming to follow the Quran ended up creating another sect of religion, just like many others.
- Despite the Quran's emphasis on direct and clear guidance and a direct connection with God, bypassing human intermediaries, many self-proclaimed scholars have:
 - Scared people into believing they will go astray without their guidance.
 - Created doubts that the Quran is not a complete book of guidance, as it does not contain all the obligations and unlawful things.
 - It diminished the Quran's claim as a clear guidance, criterion and authority, since it alone cannot guide you and save you from the failure in the afterlife.
 - Thus, they made people dependent on them for success in the afterlife, putting the Quran behind their back.
- Verse 9:31 indicates that previous people had taken their religious scholars and leaders as their Rabbs (Lord, Master, or Sustainer) besides God.
- This explains why so-called religious scholars have succeeded in creating sects throughout history.
- It is the people themselves who empower them, willingly binding themselves in chains of dependency and blind following.
- Shaitan, the master of deception, who misleads humans from the right path, is also the major role to deceive through confusions and desires in convincing people to do something that is harmful for humanity, and to lead the people away from the essence of the guidance of God, and thus, turning people away from their purpose of life.
- In case, we do not have knowledge about something, or we require some clarification, we can, and should consult well-known scholars, and benefit from their knowledge and experience, however, if anything they inform us seems morally wrong or harmful or goes against our intellect, it is our duty, if possible, to verify and evaluate the information and reliability of the sources, as we already covered the importance of using intellect.

God's Mercy and Forgiveness:

- The Quran affirms that God, in His infinite mercy, extends forgiveness to those who sincerely repent (Tawbah).
- True repentance requires a sincere realization of sin, and a firm intention to abstain from repeating the sinful act.
- Repentance is not accepted from those who persist in wrongdoing throughout their lives, even after having knowledge.

- God knows what is in the hearts, so no one can deceive Him by pretending to repent while having no intention to change.
- God does not charge someone more than its capacity.
- The decision of those who are not muslim to God, solely depends on Him, which will be based on justice, considering all the aspects and circumstances of their lives.
- Supportive verses: 39:53, 9:104, 4:17-18, 30:32, 2:286, 2:185, 5:6.

Five Most Significant Tasbeeh (Glorification) of God:

“Subhanallah, Alhamdulillah, La ilaha illallah, Godu akbar, La hawla wa la quwwata illa billah.”

Meaning– (I acknowledge) Glory of God, All Praise belongs to God, there is No Deity except God, God is Greater (than anything else– in value and obedience), there is No Power and Force/Strength except from God.

This Tasbeeh, which is derived from the Quran, recited altogether or in parts, kills our ego completely. Let's elaborate it further:

1. Subhanallah:

Glory is the foremost, ultimate and infinite attribute of God, and His all other attributes proclaim His Glory. It also signifies the transcendence of God, meaning He is free from any imperfections or limitations attributed to His creation.

Real Life Application: It tells me that humans will always be humans, no matter whatever quality they possess, whatever they have achieved, they are human just like me, and I know their limitations. I do appreciate people, but not for their glorification, rather for acknowledgement of what they have and for their motivation. I cannot glorify them, because I only glory God. Also, I never expect praise and appreciation for myself.

2. Alhamdulillah:

This one primarily means all kinds of praise belong to God. It also encompasses gratitude and appreciation. It is not possible to praise and appreciate God for every single thing as that is uncountable. Hence, this one represents all things for which God should be praised and appreciated.

Real Life Application: It emphasizes my focus on myself, signifying that I should never expect praise and appreciation, and any return of favours for the favours I do to others. Whatever I possess I am grateful to God, whatever I do, I do it as my duty and with expectation of rewards for it from God. It never allows me to have pride for my possessions and achievements, and considering others inferior or less than me.

3. La ilaha illallah:

We already discussed that it is against the divine dignity of God to worship His creation, however, people indulged in worshipping His creations in different forms. Hence, this one is to declare that we are not one of them who worship entities other than God.

Real Life Application: It assures me that my worship is towards the right direction, and also reminds me to stick to one God, and avoid any misconception.

4. Allah-u-Akbar:

This one presents a very important aspect of our life. It declares that God is above all in any aspect, like, in value, respect, love, fear and obedience.

Real Life Application: It reminds me that I should not follow my desires and emotions, rather, I should choose to do which God expects from me. It also reminds me that I should prioritize the command of God over other's, if people advise me and order me to do something contrary to the command of God.

5. La haulah wa la quwwah illa billah:

This phrase signifies that God is the source of all powers, force, energy and strength, ensuring that nothing can harm us if God does not allow it, as every single thing of the universe is under God's control. It is He who has granted power and capability to His creations. It does not mean that God will not allow any suffering and hardships in your life, because these are parts of life as a test of actions in various situations. However, anyone or anything can harm you only to the extent God allows, hence, we should not fear anyone or anything whatsoever, except God.

Real Life Application: This reminds me that the power, the strength and the capabilities I have is granted by God, and thus, it never lets me misuse them. It also takes my confidence to a very high level, and makes me fearless, especially in terms of supernatural things like, black magic, evil spirits, ghosts, false deities, etc. I don't fear anyone or anything if I have not done anything wrong. If I have done something wrong, I'll not expect God to support me, rather, I fear for the consequences of what I have done, I seek forgiveness from God.

Apart from this I keep seeking forgiveness from God. Seeking forgiveness of God for every minor mistake is due to His respect and value to us, and because of our humility, not because He will punish us for every minor mistake of ours. It is the same way as we apologise to others for every minor mistake due to their respect and value to us, and due to our humble nature.

The Value of Justice:

The Quran places a very high value on justice ('Adl), and this is reflected in numerous verses.

- God commands to be persistently standing firm in justice, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives, rich or poor. (4:135)
- Warns that even hatred of a people should not prevent you from being just. (5:8)
- God commands us to render trusts to whom they are due, and to judge with justice when we judge between people. (4:58)
- God stated to His Prophet David "Judge between the people in truth and not follow desire, as it will lead you astray from the way of God." (38:26)

Distinction of Nations and Religion:

- The Quran makes a clear distinction between religion and nationality.
- Religion is a divine institution that belongs solely to God.
- There should be no compulsion in religion, as the right has become clear from the wrong.
- They should promote knowledge, righteousness, and peace.
- Instead of fighting with each other for power supremacy, nations should engage in virtuous competition, such as:
 - Strive to excel in establishing justice.
 - Ensure the protection of people's rights, properties, and lives.
 - Work effectively to prevent corruption and causes of conflicts and civil unrest.
 - Focus on economic growth and sustainable development.
 - Promote social welfare and overall national progress.
- One nation can rule over other nations, but not to prove its supremacy, or to dominate them, or to exploit their resources, rather, help them in the above mentioned aspects.
- Supportive verse: 49:13, 5:48, 22:41, 2:256.

Essence of the Quran's Guidance:

The chapter 103 of the Quran presents a concise yet profound essence of religion in just two lines, with the following four aspects, which ensure ultimate success in life.

1. EIMAN (Belief in God and His guidance)
2. AMAL-e-SALEH (Righteous deeds)
3. Mutual Exhortation/Guidance HAQQ (Truth/Reality of God, His creations, and Purpose of life)
4. Mutual Exhortation/Guidance to SABR (Patience)

1. EIMAN (Belief (in God and His Guidance)):

We have already discussed how belief in God shapes both our lives in this world and our existence in the afterlife. It is the most effective foundation for maintaining righteousness and peace in life.

2. AMAL-e-SALEH (Righteous Deeds):

We have also explored the concept of righteous deeds, recognizing them as an inherent part of human nature and the core principle of divine religion.

3. Mutual Exhortation to HAQQ (Truth/Reality of God, His Creations, and Purpose of Life):

These two directives together create the foundation for an ideal society. However, as human beings, we are bound to make mistakes. When we see someone acting unjustly, incorrectly, or wrongfully, it is our responsibility to advise and guide them toward justice and truth. Likewise, we should be open to receiving advice and guidance from others as well. Based on this principle, God gives everyone a moral right to discourage what is wrong or incorrect, and encourage what is truth or right.

God commands us to invite people to truth with wisdom and goodness, and indulge in debate or discussion with them in a way that is best. (16:125, 29:46).

4. Mutual Exhortation/Guidance to SABR (Patience):

This is a crucial aspect of maintaining harmony and peace in our life, society and nation. When someone is facing hardships, or has been wronged, or in times of natural disasters, we should support and console them, encouraging patience and positive hope. Instead of reacting with anger or taking actions that may harm themselves, society, or the nation, they should be guided toward patience, which facilitates perseverance, wisdom and right actions.

Additionally, when mediating conflicts or engaging in debates and discussions, there is always a possibility that others may treat us unfairly. In such situations, we must practice patience instead of escalating conflicts—whether verbal or physical. Responding with restraint and understanding helps prevent further division and promotes a more peaceful resolution.

This chapter encapsulates the core essence of religion, its role in shaping a peaceful life, a just and harmonious world, emphasizing its significance in this life as well as the afterlife.

Chapter 6.8: Conclusion

As we discussed, the solution lies in knowledge. Knowledge stems from awareness and understanding—and true understanding arises through reasoning.

When multiple sources of information or differing ideas and perspectives present contradictions, the preferred source will be determined by its reliability, while the validity of ideas and perspectives will be evaluated using intellect, logic, reason, and wisdom. Those who do not rely on intellect and logic are actually not seeking truth or solution.

When there are two options before people—they must choose one and reject the other. We naturally select the one that seems correct or better according to our understanding. If someone chooses the opposite, it is considered a wrong decision. Human beings rely on their innate ability to distinguish between right and wrong, or correct and incorrect. Those who don't utilise this ability are likely under the influence of someone or something else.

The Most Authentic Book of Divine Revelation:

Textual Preservation

Let's understand the most authentic divine scripture in terms of textual preservation among the Vedas, Bible, and Quran.

1. Quran – The Quran is claimed to have only texts which are direct revelation of God, not even the Prophet's statements, and it has been preserved in its original form since its revelation. It was written down and memorized during Prophet Muhammad's lifetime and has remained unchanged for over 1400 years. The same Arabic text is found worldwide with minimal variation (no variation in the overall message of God and any concept of religion), verified through oral and written transmission.

2. Bible – The Bible contains mixed texts, direct revelations as well as the statements of the Prophet and his companions. It consists of multiple books written by different authors over centuries. The original manuscripts no longer exist, and numerous versions and translations show significant variations. The Old and New Testaments have gone through edits, additions, and translations, making textual authenticity a major concern.

3. Vedas – Unlike the Quran or Bible, the Vedas are attributed to ancient sages (rishis) inspired by divine insight, not direct revelation from God. This weakens claims of divine authenticity for those prioritizing explicit divine origin. Unlike the Quran's Uthmanic codex, the Vedas lack a single, universally accepted version. Different Vedic schools (Shakhas) preserve slightly varied texts, and auxiliary texts (e.g., Brahmanas, Upanishads) add interpretive layers, complicating claims of a pristine text.

Conclusion:

The Quran stands out as the most textually preserved among the three scriptures due to its early documentation, mass memorization, and standardized text. The Bible, while supported by a vast manuscript tradition, suffers from textual variants and translation issues, making its preservation less consistent. The Vedas, preserved through oral tradition, lack a single authoritative text and explicit divine attribution, weakening their claim to authenticity in this context. However, the Bible's historical and theological diversity and the Vedas' philosophical depth offer unique strengths.

Clarity of Message

Apart from textual preservation, the Quran's content is interactive and grounded, with a dialogic style and practical laws that address real-world issues. Its clear monotheistic framework, unified ethical code, and eschatological vision provide coherent resolutions to religious conflicts (e.g., by clarifying prior scriptures and promoting dialogues) and philosophical confusions (e.g., purpose, justice). Compared to the Bible's theological ambiguities and the Vedas' ritualistic abstraction, the Quran's intellectual clarity and practical guidance support its role as a reliable criterion.

The Bible's strength lies in its narrative depth and moral teachings, but its diverse authorship and theological ambiguities (e.g., Trinity, atonement) make it less cohesive than the Quran in resolving religious or philosophical conflicts.

The Vedas excel in metaphysical and ritual depth but are less interactive or practical for resolving religious conflicts or modern philosophical questions.

Different Concepts of God

One Supreme Reality:

After analyzing and evaluating the various perspectives of religious groups and divine scriptures, we arrived at a profound and central conclusion: there is only one Supreme Reality—**the one true Deity and Divine Authority—universally recognized, in essence, by all major religious traditions across the world today.

Manifestation and Incarnation:

The concept of manifestation practiced today in Hinduism is, in many ways, comparable to the concept of angels in the Quran. In the Quran, angels are created beings who carry out specific tasks assigned by God, and they act solely on His command—they do not respond to the pleas of creation unless permitted by God. Similarly, the various functions and roles attributed to incarnations in Hinduism—such as restoring order, guiding humanity, or executing divine justice—parallel the duties performed by angels as well as messengers of God in the Quranic understanding.

Furthermore, divine communication is not limited to a specific method or form. As exemplified in the Quran, God communicated directly with Prophet Moses (Musa), who heard God's voice coming from a tree (or a fire), demonstrating that God can speak through any medium of His choice. This highlights the idea that the Divine is not restricted by human perceptions and can manifest His will in diverse and extraordinary ways.

Manifestation and Incarnation, in true sense, mean that God manifests His power, will, and guidance through His special creation for a special purpose. This creation serves as a temporary, purposeful vehicle for the execution of divine tasks. However, God Himself remains the Eternal, Formless, and Ultimate Reality—beyond all physical limitations and embodiments.

Therefore, true wisdom lies in directing worship and glorification toward the Supreme Reality, not toward the temporary creation through which His power is manifested. Worshipping the created rather than the Creator shifts the focus away from the source of all existence, and this often causes misunderstandings and distortions of the original divine message, and often leads to polytheism and idol worship.

Based on my analysis, I have found that the primary reason many people struggle to realize and connect with God is because they are unaware of the true concept and attributes of God. Once a

person understands these correctly, the path to connection becomes clear and natural. They begin to experience the real benefits of having God in their life and of following His guidance.

That said, if someone still chooses to use an idol as a means to connect with God, that is their personal decision. What truly matters—both to me and, more importantly, to the well-being of the world—is a person's sincere belief in God and their commitment to righteousness. These are the qualities that shape a just, compassionate, and meaningful life.

We can engage in respectful and well-mannered dialogue and discussion on matters such as the Supreme Reality, manifestation, incarnation, and other unseen realities, but ultimately, it is God who will decide who was right and who was wrong. Our responsibility as believers is not to impose our perspective on others, but to love and support those who are sincere, righteous, and devoted to God—those who believe in Him, glorify Him, and love Him from the depths of their hearts.

Verse 32.4 of Quran and many others, indicates that God alone is the creator and sovereign of the universe, and there is no protector or intercessor for us besides Him (against natural orders and disasters). It means no one else except God can control the natural order (law) of the universe, and no one except He can take plea to save us from natural orders and disasters.

God as Father, Son (Jesus) and Holy Spirit (Trinity):

Many Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God in a literal sense—akin to a father-son relationship among human beings. From this belief, they conclude that Jesus shares in the divinity of the Supreme God. Others view God as one, yet manifested in three forms: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These beliefs, along with the idea of salvation through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, stem largely from some ambiguous text and interpretation in the Bible. However, such concepts conflict with human intellect, logic, reason, and the very nature and attributes of God.

The Quran clarifies and confirms that Jesus was a prophet and messenger, just like those before him. He was indeed a special creation of God, much like Adam—created without a father. The Holy Spirit too is described as a creation of God, serving specific divine functions, not a part of God Himself.

Given the known issues regarding the preservation and authenticity of the Bible's original texts, the clear and well-preserved guidance of the Quran stands as the final authority and witness on these matters.

Advaita Vedanta:

Advaita Vedanta is a prominent philosophical school within Hinduism that emphasizes the absolute oneness of Brahman (the Ultimate Reality) and Atman (the individual soul). According to this view, the phenomenal world is Maya, or illusion, and only Brahman truly exists. The diversity and multiplicity we experience are considered mere illusions, akin to dreams.

Critical Analysis:

While the philosophy of Advaita has deeply influenced spiritual discourse in India, it appears to contradict both reason and the natural disposition of human beings. The very idea that nothing truly exists except one Ultimate Reality—and that everything else, including nature, our own self, and our actions, is merely an illusion—runs counter to what is clearly and consistently affirmed by the Vedas themselves, as well as divine revelations like the Quran and the Bible.

Advaita implies that if you believe in your own existence or in the existence of the world around you, you are under delusion. Whatever you see, touch, or do is equated to a dream-like experience. Ultimately, it asserts that the goal is to realize "You are The Supreme Reality (God)," and everything else is non-existent.

This line of thinking seems less like a theological doctrine and more like a psychological approach—a “treatment” for ego or spiritual confusion. By reducing the ego to nothingness and merging the self into a grand unity, it can serve to humble an arrogant or self-centered person. In that sense, it may be effective as a psychological tool, rather than a religion.

In fact, true belief in God and His religion already provides the foundation for peace, joy, and humility—without needing to dissolve the reality of the self or the world. A believer who understands the correct concept of God, creation, and purpose in life naturally finds inner peace and freedom from stress. Thus, they do not require the psychological bypass offered by Advaita. They live with clarity, guided by revelation, reason, and moral responsibility—not by denial of the real world.

Is Everything God, or Is God in Everything?

We know that God is All-Knowing, All-Hearing, and All-Seeing. This conveys the impression that He is present everywhere—both within and beyond all things. God is aware of everything, including what lies deep within our hearts—our innermost thoughts, feelings, intentions, and beliefs. This suggests that there is a constant, unseen connection between our consciousness and God's knowledge, though no one but God can truly perceive the inner states of each soul. It highlights that God has complete access to every form of physical matter as well as every level of consciousness.

Although God's nature is beyond full human comprehension, we can attempt to grasp the relationship between God and His creation through the analogy provided in the Quran, in verse 24:35.

In this verse, God presents a profound analogy using a lamp and an olive tree. The olive tree produces oil, which fuels the lamp and enables it to shine. Here, the light represents knowledge, while the oil symbolizes energy and consciousness—the essential elements that enable existence and functionality. This is one of the most insightful analogies to understand the relationship between God and His creation.

Just as the tree is the source of the oil yet distinct in nature from it, this signifies that everything has originated from God—including the energy and consciousness that constitute the universe, yet, their nature of existence remains different from God's essence. This analogy reflects the limits of our understanding of God: we can comprehend the relationship between the Creator and creation to a certain extent, but we cannot go beyond it.

Interestingly, modern science, particularly Quantum Field Theory (QFT), echoes this concept by suggesting that the universe is fundamentally made of quantum fields—forms of energy that give rise to all particles. This scientific insight beautifully aligns with the metaphor, reinforcing the notion that the source is unseen but fundamental, and everything else emerges from it.

The same verse also suggests that the oil itself almost glows even without being touched by fire, and when ignited, it produces an even brighter light. This symbolizes that everything in the universe has been endowed with innate knowledge—from the smallest particles to the largest objects. It points to the idea that every element of creation inherently “knows” its function, whether as a component of a larger system or as a complete entity.

The external fire represents external knowledge or revelation, which applies especially to human beings, who are unique in possessing both innate knowledge and the capacity to acquire external knowledge.

This analogy answers a profound question: “Why does everything do what it does?” The response is that each created thing has been given built-in instructions and the capability to carry them out—a silent but perfect obedience to the Creator's design. This also reflects that the universe operates not by chance, but through purposeful and intelligent order.

Quran Revealed to the Prophet by Vishnu:

Let's understand how the word "Vishnu" and "Allah" refer to the same Supreme Reality.

As per Hindu Beliefs, Vishnu helped Manu during the Great Flood:

- **The Great Flood:** Hindu scriptures, particularly the Satapatha Brahmana (a Vedic text) and the Puranas (like the Matsya Purana), narrate the same flood that devastated the Earth.
- **Manu as the Ancestor:** In these accounts, Manu is warned about an upcoming severe flood by the Matsya avatar (fish incarnation) of Lord Vishnu.
- **Building a Boat:** Following Vishnu's instructions, Manu builds a large boat to save himself, his family, the seven sages (Saptarishis), and seeds of all plants and animals to repopulate the Earth after the flood.
- **Guidance by Vishnu:** The Matsya avatar guides the boat through the floodwaters, often by Manu tying the boat to the fish's horn using a giant serpent.
- **Survival and Repopulation:** After the waters recede, Manu is the sole human survivor (along with those on the boat) and is considered the common ancestor of the current cycle of humanity.

In Quran, Allah helped Noah (Nuh) during the Great Flood:

- The prophet Noah (Nuh) is regarded as one of the major prophet in Abrahamic traditions, and a vast part of the Quran discusses him.
- The Quran narrates that Prophet Noah (Nūḥ) was commanded by Allah to warn his people against idol worship and call them to worship the one God. Despite preaching for 950 years, the vast majority rejected his message and mocked him.
- Allah instructed Noah to build a large boat under His guidance and inspiration, to carry his family (except the disbelievers), and pairs of every animal species. When the divinely decreed time came, a great flood was unleashed, engulfing and drowning all the disbelievers.
- Noah and those who believed, along with the animals, were saved in the Ark. After the floodwaters receded, the boat came to rest on a mount (Mount Judi), and Allah commanded Noah to disembark and for life to begin anew with blessings upon him and the surviving communities.
- It is Allah who revealed the Quran to Prophet Muhammad, and similarly the Torah and Gospel (Bible) as well to Moses and Jesus.
- This indicates that idol worship and other forms of polytheism were there in practice before Vedas, like in other parts of the world, which ended with the flood, and then gradually came back again in practice in the forms of nature worship or idol worship. Vedas don't support idol worship, speak against idol worship.
- The Quran also indicates that the society was divided into superior and inferior classes during the time of Noah, which signifies the caste system was also present along with idol worship in India, and both polytheism and the caste system returned to the people gradually after the death of Noah.

It indicates that Vishnu and Allah are the same Supreme Reality, and the Quran, the Torah and the Gospel (Bible), all were revealed by the same God. This also supports the claim of Vedas that the Supreme Reality is one, but people call Him by different names. Call Him Vishnu, Shiva, Shakti, Ganesh, Murugan, Deva, Mahadev, Shankar, Bholenath, Mahakaal, Devi, Bhagwan, Ishwar, Prabhu, Parmeshwar, Parmaatma, Waheguru, Khuda, Rab, Allah, ilah, God, Divine, Lord, HaShem, YHWH, etc. Some people also consider Krishna and Rama as names of the Supreme God, hence, there should be no confusion that they refer to any other entity as God.

The religious concepts in Vaishnava Sampradaya are closest to the Quran, like the distinction of soul and the Supreme Reality, purpose of life, and eternal service to Vishnu in the afterlife (the eternal life after our death in this world).

Purpose of Life:

Our natural consciousness deeply senses that we are born to live, enjoy, and thrive forever—not to become dust. We instinctively seek solutions to our problems and sufferings, and sometimes moments of rest, but we never truly desire the end of our existence.

Let's have a look at the summary of the purpose of life in different perspectives of religion:

Hinduism: Soul (Atman) undergoes rebirth (Samsara) based on karma, transiting through temporary heavenly (Svarga) or lower realms before the next life, aiming for liberation (Moksha). Vaishnavism emphasizes that the natural and eternal state of the individual soul (Jiva) is to be a loving servant of the Supreme Lord. Developing an intimate and trusting relationship, surrendering everything to the Lord, and offering one's entire being and will to God (**This is the essence of true Islam**).

Buddhism: Consciousness continues after death, leading to rebirth based on karmic energy within Samsara, with various impermanent realms; the ultimate goal is Nirvana, beyond the cycle.

Jainism: Eternal individual soul (Jiva) transmigrates immediately after death based on karma, experiencing temporary heavenly or hellish realms, striving for liberation (Moksha) in a pure, separate state.

Sikhism: Soul continues its journey through reincarnation after physical death, aiming for reunion with God (Waheguru) in Sachkhand (Realm of Truth) through divine grace.

Judaism: Diverse beliefs range from Sheol (underworld) to Gan Eden (Paradise) and Gehinnom (Hell), with concepts of Olam Ha-Ba (World to Come), resurrection, and sometimes reincarnation (Gilgul).

Christianity: Believers go to Heaven with God, non-believers to Hell; a future resurrection of the body into a new heaven and earth; some believe in Purgatory for purification.

Quran: Our earthly life is a test of our righteousness, which is based on the intellect and knowledge we possess, while also allowing enjoyment to an extent. We should absolutely obey God, glorify Him with praise and gratitude, love Him above all, and surrender ourselves to His will. We will have an eternal life after death in another world, which will resemble this world, but be far better, peaceful, joyful, and free from suffering (for righteous believers), or full of suffering, similar to or even worse than the hardships and pain in this world (for evil disbeliever).

We are already content with the life of this world, but the only problem is suffering. Hence, the life of this world with the best experience and free from any suffering is already a preferred choice of human beings, without looking for any further options.

Our natural longing for continuity, purpose, and fulfillment aligns perfectly with what the Quran describes as the purpose of our life. It confirms that the reward of our righteous living in this world is not just to escape from suffering, rather, we will be given an eternal life, similar to this world, but be far better, peaceful, joyful, and free from suffering—exactly as we desire a life to be. It presents a vision that is not only logically sound and emotionally fulfilling, but also in complete harmony with our natural disposition.

The purpose of life of all the movements of religion is to escape from suffering, and attain an eternal and blissful life—free from suffering. Righteousness is a common factor in all for the success in the achievement of the BLISSFUL LIVING in the next life.

Different Rituals and Spiritual Practices:

As we discussed earlier, the true purpose behind rituals and spiritual practices is to nurture our connection with God and to strengthen our commitment to righteousness by serving as a constant reminder of the purpose of life.

The Quran confirms that different nations were given different laws, rules, and rituals, and that their test was in how they followed what was revealed to them. This insight emphasizes that we should not be overly concerned or divided over the variations in rituals, but instead, strive towards what is good and beneficial within all of them. Rather than engaging in arguments over which practices are right or wrong, we should focus on doing what leads to goodness.

Of course, it is natural and even beneficial to advise others based on what we believe is correct or more enlightened. However, it is essential to always keep in mind that what ultimately matters most is sincere belief in God and righteous conduct. These are the universal values that transcend all forms and traditions.

Act of Worship:

From a human perspective, it is easy to understand that God does not require material offerings such as flowers, fruits, milk, or sweets, etc. Rather, what He truly expects from us is glorification, gratitude, love, and sincere devotion. God is pleased when we are righteous and just in our actions and decisions, and when we show compassion and care toward others.

Material things are not for God—they are the needs of His creatures. So instead of offering these to God, we should direct such resources toward those who actually need them. This is the kind of worship that aligns with both reason and righteousness—one that reflects our love for God through service to His creation.

Daily Attires:

There is no specific religious attire prescribed by God for daily life in His divine religion. The primary principles that should guide our clothing choices are modesty, self-discipline, and humility—not excessive display, pride, or an attempt to show superiority.

From a rational perspective, it does not align with human logic or divine justice to claim that God mandated a specific dress code for all people at all times. No legal or moral system in human history has imposed daily attire regulations, except in particular contexts such as schools, professions, etc. to maintain order or discipline.

The Quran clearly states that clothing is meant for covering the body and as a means of adornment. Therefore, the spirit of clothing in divine religion is to protect dignity, encourage decency, and reflect inner character—not to serve as a religious label or identity marker.

Different Names of Religion and Sects

Basically it is only Islam and Sanatan Dharma which are claimed to be the name of the divine religion. Christianity, Judaism, Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism are not claimed to be the name of the religion of God. We have already covered that there is neither any personal name of God, nor any name of His religion. The only thing is Religion/Dharma/Deen, which contextually refers to the LAW of GOD, which is eternal and absolutely followed by every single creation, except human beings (and Jinns as mentioned in the Quran).

Groups like Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Judaism, Christianity, Sunnism and Shiism can be considered as different sects or movements with different perspectives of the same underlying religion, but of course, the truth or best is always one, which can be found anywhere with anybody,

not necessarily with a particular group of people, and hence, we should explore, analyse and evaluate all the claims and resources.

Sanatan Dharma, as we discussed earlier, translates to "Eternal Religion," referring to the **Religion of God**. In this sense, if a believer says, "I don't follow Sanatan Dharma," they are essentially saying, "I do not follow the Eternal Religion." A true believer, by definition, cannot make such a claim.

However, it is important to understand that it is **not necessary to call the religion of God "Sanatan Dharma"**. The concept of **Dharma** itself is eternal and inherently belongs to God. This universal truth transcends labels and names, and **regardless of the title or tradition, the essence of God's religion remains the same** throughout the world.

Islam, as we discussed earlier, translates to "Submission" or "Surrender," meaning "Absolute Obedience." This indicates that **Islam** is not a name of a religion, rather it describes the core essence of the religion itself. **Deen-al-Islam** refers to the religion (or law) that requires absolute obedience, much like how every law requires full compliance.

In this context, if a believer says, "I don't follow **Deen-al-Islam** or Islam," they are literally saying, "I do not follow the religion that demands absolute obedience." Similarly, if someone claims, "I am not a Muslim," they are, in effect, saying, "I do not submit or surrender to God, or I do not absolutely obey God." A true believer, by definition, cannot make such a statement.

Religion does not belong to a Group:

No group can exclusively claim Deena-al-Islam or Islam belongs only to them, because any one can claim that they practice Islam, and it is God who will tell them if their claim was true or not. Similarly, no group can exclusively claim that Sanatan Dharma belongs only to them, because anyone can claim that the religion they follow is Sanatan Dharma.

No group can exclusively claim that **Deen-al-Islam** or **Islam** belongs only to them, because anyone can claim that they practice Islam (absolute obedience to God). Ultimately, it is **God** who will determine the truth of their claim. Similarly, no group can exclusively claim that **Sanatan Dharma** belongs solely to them, because anyone can assert that the religion they follow is **Sanatan Dharma** (Eternal Religion of God).

No One has Right to pass Divine Judgement:

The Supreme Reality and Righteousness, which form the core of all religions, are universally recognized across the world. As for the truth of the unseen world, no one except God has the authority to determine what is correct or incorrect in case of contradictions. It is God alone who will decide who was on the truth (in terms of the Ultimate Reality and the unseen world), whose religion was truly Sanatan, and who genuinely practiced Islam. Those who follow the truth, adhere to Sanatan Dharma, or practice Islam will certainly succeed in the next life. We have no right and no mandate and contract from God to pass judgment on others.

No Scope to Hate Others based on Religious Perspectives:

An **HONEST & WISE** person can never hate, fight, or refuse to help those who do not agree with or accept that they are on the right path. Only **EVIL & FOOLISH** people would act in such a manner, and they should not be regarded as true believers or righteous, even if they are religious scholars. However, people do have the **moral right** to guide and advise each other, but this should always be done in a respectful and thoughtful manner. It is crucial to remember that **sincere belief in God and righteousness** is what truly matters above all.

Two Major Groups: Believers and Non-Believers:

There are basically only **two major groups: Believers and Non-Believers**. Believers should **respect and regard all the divine books**, following what is correct, beneficial, and in alignment with their sincere understanding. They should seek guidance from experts of these divine books if further clarification is needed, but they should avoid affiliating themselves with any sect. It is important to remember that any advice given by experts that goes against human **morality and intellect**, or that causes **divisions** and **conflicts** in society, should **not** be followed blindly.

In the future, I hope it is the divine books that will be the sources of guidance which will be accessible to all, and people will follow beneficial guidance from all the divine books, rather than affiliate themselves with a religious group, movement or sect.

Religious Scholars should be intellectual, wise and well educated people, who should have knowledge from all the divine books, and should be able to handle contradiction very well. They should not divide the religion of God, and will not cause hate and conflicts in human society in the name religion.

Role of this Book:

I hope this book, which serves as a conclusion of the divine books, will lay the foundation for initial guidance for future generations on God, religion, and the purpose of life, so that no one will be able to mislead them.

Summary

1. **No Scope for Rejection of Existence of God:** There is no scope for rejecting the existence of a Creator of the universe based on human intellect, logic, and reason.
2. **The Quran is the Most Reliable Divine Scripture:** The Quran is the most reliably preserved of all divine revelations, and it offers the most effective resolution to religious conflicts.
3. **God is One:** There is only one Supreme Reality acknowledged across the world — the one and only Divine Authority worthy of glory and worship.
4. **God is the Source of All Existence:** God is the ultimate source of all energy, fundamental forces, consciousness, and innate knowledge — present not only in living beings, but also as the inherent knowledge, order and potential within non-living matter.
5. **Worshipping God in any Physical Form of Manifestation or Incarnation is Wrong:** Worshipping God in any physical form—such as idols, animals, stones, or trees—as manifestations or incarnations of the Divine is a serious error, both from the perspective of human intellect and logic, and as clarified in divine books like the Vedas, Bible and Quran. However, we must still hold respect and love for those who sincerely love and glorify the Supreme God, even if their way of doing so is not entirely correct. Sincerity of heart and the intention to glorify the Supreme God should be acknowledged with love, respect and compassion, not with hatred.
6. **Vishnu (in Hinduism) is the same God in Quran, Torah and Gospel (Bible):** The God known as Vishnu in Hinduism is the same God in the divine scriptures of Abrahamic religion, like Quran, Torah and Gospel (Bible).
7. **Different Names of God:** The same Supreme God is called by different names like Vishnu, Shiva, Shakti, Ganesh, Murugan, Ishwar, Bhagwan, Prabhu, God, Divine, Allah, ilah, Khuda, Wahe Guru, YHWH, HaShem, etc.
8. **No Name of Religion:** There is no specific name for the religion of God. Terms like Sanatan and Islam are not names of a religion, but characteristics of the divine path. God's true religion is Sanatan—meaning Eternal—and it requires Islam—meaning Absolute Obedience. Therefore, anyone who absolutely surrenders to the will of God (absolutely obeys God) and lives a life of righteousness in action, thought, and speech, is a Muslim—one who truly submits to God (absolutely obeys God).

9. **Two Groups Only; Believer and Nonbeliever:** There are only two true categories: *Believer* and *Nonbeliever*. A believer should not affiliate with any sect or label that divides humanity. They must not blindly follow any idea or advice that contradicts human morality, reason, or leads to division and conflict in society.
10. **Nationality is our Identity not Religion:** Tribe, locality, and nationality are natural identities of human beings—not their religion. Religion is one, while tribes and nationalities are many. Therefore, human beings should be identified by their nationality or tribe, not by any religious label.
11. **Rituals and Spiritual Practices can be Different:** Rituals and spiritual practices may differ across nations and cultures, since they have been shaped by different contexts and guidance over time as confirmed by God in the Quran. Instead of engaging in arguments about what is right or wrong, we should seek and support all that is good or better, based on sincere understanding and wisdom. True righteousness lies in helping one another in every aspect of life—including respecting and supporting each other's rituals and spiritual journeys—so long as they promote goodness, morality, and a connection with the Supreme Reality.
12. **Belief in God and Righteousness are the Core of the Divine Religion:** What truly matters is sincere belief in God and adherence to righteousness. Instead of engaging in conflict over which belief is right or wrong, we should focus on nurturing these core values. Ultimately, it is God who will decide what is right and wrong in matters of the unseen. Our role is to live with sincerity and righteousness, leaving the judgment to the Divine.
13. **Life is a Test of Your Decisions and Actions:** This life is to test you in your decisions and actions in various situations, based on your intellect, knowledge, and wisdom. Instead of becoming overly worried or tense, face each situation calmly, taking the right steps with optimism and a positive outlook.
14. **No more Books of Divine Guidance is required for Humanity after the Quran:** no more book of divine guidance is required on religion and God for humanity after the Quran, as it has already clarified all that was required, and has provided the complete resolution. Human beings are now more than capable enough to resolve all confusion and conflicts.
15. No further book of divine guidance is needed for humanity after the Quran, as it has already clarified everything required and provided a complete resolution. The Quran stands as the final source of guidance on matters of religion, God. It addresses all aspects of life, offering solutions to fundamental questions and leaving no room for confusion or contradiction. With the Quran's teachings, humanity now possesses the necessary wisdom and clarity enough to resolve all confusion and conflicts.
16. **Invite Others towards Truth:** It is everyone's moral right and duty to advise, guide, and invite others toward the truth, particularly regarding the Supreme Reality, the Purpose of Life, and other unseen matters. This should be done with utmost respect, kindness, and in the best possible manner, without any form of pressure. The goal is to share wisdom and understanding while maintaining a spirit of compassion and openness.
17. **Be Open to Discussion and Dialogue:** We should never be arrogant towards anyone who advises, guides, or invites us toward the truth or what is correct and better, through respectful discussion and dialogue. If someone does not understand or agree that they are wrong, there should be no conflict. Everyone has the right to choose their beliefs, and we should respect their freedom to do so, while continuing to promote understanding and righteousness.
18. **Three Main Reasons behind the Persistent Religious Divisions and Conflicts:** Three main reasons why people could not understand and resolve the religious conflicts and confusions:
 - a. **Lack of Honesty:** It prevents people from honestly trying to understand.
 - b. **Arrogance:** It prevents people from accepting what is true, correct or better, even if they understand.
 - c. **Freedom:** It restricts individuals from freely choosing and expressing what they believe to be true, correct, or better.
19. **Be Human, Not Animals** - After this book, I hope that every individual will strive to elevate their own status and help others do the same, rising above the instincts of mere animals like sheep and donkeys. By harnessing and developing their intellect, people will no longer

be misled in the name of God and religion, but will instead follow a path of true understanding and wisdom.

20. **The HONEST AND WISE can never hate others:** Those who are honest and wise can never hate or fight with those who disagree with their views. Only the **EVIL AND FOOLISH** would resort to such behavior. True wisdom lies in respect and peaceful dialogue, even when opinions differ.
21. **Three Major Areas for Humanity and Nations to Focus:** There are three major areas for humanity to focus on:
 - a. **Survival:** This includes Layer 2 and 3 of our framework of knowledge as given in the earlier section of this book, focusing on economical, medical and technological, and overall national development.
 - b. **Righteousness:** This includes Layer 1, 4 and 5, focusing on promoting righteousness, compassion, and social justice in the individuals on societal, local and national level.
 - c. **Expansion of Knowledge:** Working on scientific research and discoveries for expansion of human knowledge.

Chapter 7:

Atheism

As we discussed earlier, the solution lies in knowledge. Knowledge stems from awareness and understanding—and true understanding arises through reasoning.

When there are two options before people—they must choose one and reject the other. We naturally select the one that seems correct or better according to our understanding. If someone chooses the opposite, it is considered a wrong decision. Human beings rely on their innate ability to distinguish between right and wrong, or correct and incorrect. Those who don't utilise this ability are likely under the influence of someone or something else.

Let's find out if the claim of the existence of a Creator is correct or incorrect based on human understanding.

Belief in the Creator:

Through our intellect, logic and knowledge, we arrive at the conclusion that the universe could not have come into existence from nothing on its own. There must be a fundamental source—an origin of all origins—that serves as an inexhaustible reservoir of energy, fundamental forces, and limitless potential, and the carefully calibrated system of the universe itself hints at an infinite power and wisdom far beyond chance. Hence, belief in the claim of the existence of God is the result of human intellect, logic and reasoning.

It is evident that people across the world already possess an awareness of the Ultimate Reality, recognized universally as a divine authority under various names. Furthermore, there are widespread claims of individuals having received divine knowledge, either through direct revelation of divine inspiration. In our examination of these sources, we gave priority to those that are claimed to be directly revealed by the Divine.

Divine knowledge provides a logical explanation for the origin of existence that aligns with our established scientific understanding. It also reveals the purpose of life, and lays down a mandatory comprehensive moral framework for humanity—one that ensures social justice and peace for every individual. Furthermore, it affirms the existence of an eternal life after death, where everyone will face the consequences of their actions and disbelief in God—especially when such disbelief stems from arrogance. It also gives the good tidings of a blissful eternal life for righteous believers.

Hence, belief in the religion of God is grounded in human intellect, reason, and wisdom, and it also aligns perfectly with the innate disposition of human beings.

Belief in the Afterlife

Given that energy exists as we know it today, and there is a force with limitless potential, knowledge, and wisdom—and every force must have a source—let's call that source God.

Imagine a world where humans exist in a beautiful, self-sustaining place—lush landscapes, food, water, animals—but without any knowledge of science, the cosmos, or even the concept of God. Their only concern is survival. Suddenly, a person among them claims to be a messenger of God and says:

“There exists a force, full of wisdom and power with limitless potentials. This force, which I call God, is the source of something called energy. With this energy, which is infinitely small. God will create an entire universe—one beyond your current imagination. It will have stars, planets, laws of physics, and eventually, conscious beings like yourselves. Among them, one species—humans—will be given such intelligence and capability that they will be able to do so and so.”

Now, if you were one of those beings, with no prior knowledge of such things—no science, no word for "galaxy" or "atom" and many other terms and aspects—would you believe this person?

That is exactly what the disbelievable are doing in rejecting the concept of afterlife. While assuming that what they are doing is based on reason and logic, but, in fact, they are doing so because of their limited perspective, which they themselves have chosen to stick to.

Why did the Messenger of God not explain about the Science behind the Existence and its Origin?

How would the messenger explain the origin of the universe and its such complex laws and functions? That's why God didn't give them such a complex task, and also because God created human beings as a special species with the ability to acquire knowledge through their own intellect and reasoning. However, God also provided verses hinting at the ultimate reality of existence and its origin, expecting humans to pick it up as signs and ponder over it for further understanding.

How could a messenger possibly explain the origin of the universe and its incredibly complex laws and functions to people with no prior concept of such realities? That is precisely why God did not burden them with such a complex task. Instead, God created human beings with the unique ability to acquire knowledge through intellect and reasoning.

However, God did provide verses that subtly point toward the ultimate reality of existence and its origin—signs meant to inspire reflection and deeper understanding. It is through these signs that humans are expected to explore, ponder, and gradually uncover the truth. God would not reveal the whole mystery of existence and its origin purposely in order to test the capability granted to human beings.

Even after their innate capability of understanding, scientific knowledge, and information received through divine communication (as claimed), many would doubt, or disbelieve especially if the message challenges their comfort zones, or if arrogance or tribal ego blinds them.

Declaration of Atheism:

Disbelief in God is Baseless:

Rejecting the existence of God contradicts human intellect, logic, and reason, as demonstrated in this book. Likewise, denying the possibility of life after death—revival, reward, and punishment based on one's choices and actions—lacks any rational foundation. Such denial not only puts one's eternal life at risk without valid reason but also offers no real benefit.

Arrogance behind Disbelief:

After the clarifications provided in this book, rejecting belief in God and religion becomes an irrational and reckless decision. Therefore, choosing disbelief—despite evidence and reasoning—is a decision driven by arrogance. It reflects the rejection of truth and the selection of a clearly worse option, going against the very faculties of intellect, reason, and wisdom that define our humanity.

Other Possible Reasons of Disbelief:

I understand that many people had valid reasons—at least to some extent—for turning away from belief in God and religion. This is largely because religious groups, over time, have been involved in actions that have clearly harmed humanity: promoting division, hatred, conflict, oppression, persecution, violence, and even terrorism. Furthermore, religion often restricted people from fully using their intellect and logic, encouraging beliefs that contradicted reason and suppressing freedom to question or think independently. This caused genuine intellectual growth. In many cases, religious leaders exploited their followers, treating them as if they were mindless beings—like sheep or donkeys—meant only to obey blindly. However, with the clarification of the true concept of God and religion, as presented here, there remains no justifiable basis for rejection.

Mental States of Disbelievers:

Based on my observation, I believe that many individuals who have declared themselves atheists, especially apostates, have reached a mental state where reconsidering their decision seems nearly impossible—even when that decision contradicts human intellect, logic, and wisdom. The underlying reason for such rigidity is similar to that of blind followers within sectarian religious groups: a lack of honesty and humility, coupled with arrogance. Additionally, many are influenced by the psychological pressure of conforming to their community. Rather than independently using intellect and reason, they often follow the prevailing views of their group—just as religious followers do—without genuine critical examination.

Analogy of Children fits on Disbelievers:

For many of them, the analogy of a mischievous child is quite fitting. The child, due to its limited understanding and perspective, is unable to distinguish between right and wrong, or between what is harmful and what is beneficial for them. As a result, they often choose things or acts that are harmful or bad while avoiding things and acts that are beneficial or good for them—both in the present and the future. However, they do not realize at the time that they are making wrong choices, even after a clear explanation of their carelessness, mistakes and consequences. As they grow older and gain knowledge and life experience, their perspective shifts entirely. Only in rare cases some individuals continue making the same poor decisions into adulthood, usually due to underdeveloped cognitive or emotional growth. Therefore, a disbeliever simply needs to expand their perspective in order to understand God and religion.

Atheism is a Malicious Activity:

If disbelievers are unable to broaden their perspective, it's not necessarily a problem—as long as they live righteously, and keep their disbelief to themselves. What truly matters to the world is the practice of righteousness. The issue arises when a disbeliever, due to arrogance or other limitations, not only declares atheism openly, but also actively attempts to pull others down to their limited perspectives, and promotes atheism. In this case, atheism is a problem, as it would be a malicious and destructive activity against humanity because atheism:

- Contradicts human intellect, logic, reason, and wisdom in rejecting belief in God and Religion.
- Dismisses a system that offers far more meaning, purpose, and benefit than the alternative they prefer.
- Discourages others from believing in God and religion—something that is profoundly beneficial and crucial for both individual and the collective good of humanity.
- Leads to a subjective and situational approach to morality, where individual moods, circumstances, and personal biases shape moral decisions, resulting in inconsistent moral standards and potentially making individuals unreliable or problematic in their interactions with others.

- Endangers people's eternal future without any valid justification or meaningful benefit in return.

In summary, belief in the claim of the existence of God and religion is rooted in human intellect, logic, reason, and wisdom, and it aligns naturally with the innate disposition of human beings, and it ensures righteousness, justice and peace—whereas rejecting God and religion goes against all of these foundational aspects of human understanding, and makes life of individuals at risk for no reason and benefits, and also potentially making them unreliable or problematic in their interactions with other

Chapter 8:

Global Solution for Nationality and Religious Identity

Distinction of Nation and Religion:

The Quran provides guidance for addressing religious diversity on societal, national, and international levels. It establishes that religion and nationality are two separate aspects of life. In matters of religious diversity, there should be no compulsion—whether in beliefs, rituals, or spiritual practices. However, individuals have the moral right to advise, guide, and invite others towards what they believe is correct or better, but this must be done in a respectful and thoughtful manner. It is essential to remember that what truly matters is **belief in God** and **righteousness**. As believers, we should love and respect those who love and glorify God and practice righteousness, regardless of their specific rituals and spiritual practices.

Religious Identity and Community:

The Supreme God and the core moral principles remain universal for all people, forming the foundation of religion. It is up to individuals to choose what they believe is correct, and to follow the rituals and spiritual practices they find to be correct, better, or beneficial. Everyone should take responsibility, if required, to help others in their societies, and localities, and offer support to their nation in any way they can.

We are called to help all people, regardless of their religious beliefs, rituals, or spiritual practices. Whenever necessary, we should be open to assisting others in their spiritual and ritual practices. Religious scholars and all individuals should strive to understand the diverse rituals and spiritual practices within their societies. This awareness promotes respect and unity.

People should be allowed to engage in spiritual practices of any religious tradition, especially those involving meditation and prayer, in any religious space, with the necessary discipline. Religious scholars and community members should support and guide them, as these practices ultimately promote righteousness and contribute to the well-being of our nations and the world.

Our identity should be based on our nationality, tribe, and locality, rather than religious labels. Shared citizenship and geographical belonging are the most important identifiers, as religion is one, and tribes and nations are many. This view aligns with the teachings of the Quran, as we have discussed earlier. **Therefore, individuals should be recognized primarily by their nationality, tribe, and locality, not by their religious affiliations.**

Religious Scholars:

States should develop a comprehensive university curriculum to certify religious scholars, which should include study of all the major religious texts, in order to handle contradictions well, playing the major role to discourage conflicts, and promote righteousness and harmony in human society. Minimum requirement should be a post graduate for someone to be allowed to assume responsibilities of a religious scholar, like teaching religious subjects, and giving speeches and sermons in religious premises or public places. Through all the 5 years after 12th standard, the

curriculum should only include studies of social, religious and philosophical subjects, and any specialization in PG.

States should establish a comprehensive university-level curriculum to certify religious scholars, ensuring that they are well-equipped to handle religious contradictions with clarity and wisdom. This curriculum should include study of all the major divine books and religious philosophies from around the world, with the aim of promoting mutual understanding, discouraging conflict, and fostering righteousness and harmony within human society.

A minimum educational qualification of a postgraduate degree should be required for anyone who wishes to assume responsibilities as a religious scholar—whether that involves teaching religious subjects, delivering sermons, or speaking publicly on matters of religion. The academic path for such a role should span at least five years after the 12th standard, focusing entirely on social, religious, ethical, and philosophical studies. Postgraduate programs can then offer specialization in specific areas of religious perspectives and traditions.

This approach would ensure that religious scholars are not only knowledgeable and balanced, but also capable of guiding society in a way that upholds righteousness, intellect, and unity across diverse communities.

Society, Locality and Nationality:

As human beings, we carry layered responsibilities throughout our lives—towards our family, our society, our locality, and our nation. Our *primary responsibility* lies with our family, and the immediate society and locality in which we live. This includes supporting them through their needs, contributing to their growth, and actively participating in resolving local challenges and fostering development. Beyond this, individuals from other families and societies fall under our *secondary responsibility*. While they may not be directly within our daily influence, we still owe them support whenever needed, especially in times of crisis or hardship.

On a broader level, we have a *collective responsibility* towards our *entire nation*. Every citizen should seek to contribute positively to national development, stability, and well-being—whether through education, innovation, service, or civic duty.

And as a member of a global human community, nations also bear responsibility towards *other nations*. We must extend help where it is needed—through diplomacy, aid, collaboration, or solidarity—because our shared humanity transcends borders.

This tiered structure of responsibility helps cultivate a more compassionate, unified, and progressive world.

Migration:

If we migrate to any other part of the world, then the society and locality there, and that nation would become our primary responsibility. Our native nation would become secondary responsibility, and other nations would fall under our tertiary responsibility. In case we can not identify your native nation, as it is possible after generations, the nation you have migrated to will be considered as your native nation.

When we migrate to another part of the world, the *society, locality, and nation* we move to become our **primary responsibility**. We are expected to contribute positively to the welfare, development, and harmony of that new environment, as we are now part of it.

Our *native nation*—where we or our ancestors originally belonged—then becomes our **secondary responsibility**. We should support it whenever possible, especially in times of need or crisis, but our day-to-day obligations lie where we currently reside.

Other nations around the world continue to fall under our **tertiary responsibility**. As global citizens, we still have a moral duty to care about and support other nations whenever necessary.

In cases where one's native nation can no longer be clearly identified—such as after multiple generations of migration—the *new nation of residence* should be regarded as the native nation. This approach helps foster stronger bonds with the society, locality and nation we live in, while maintaining a sense of shared humanity across the world.

Role of States:

Instead of fighting with each other for power supremacy, nations as a state should engage in virtuous competition, such as:

- Strive to excel in establishing justice.
- Ensure the protection of people's rights, properties, and lives.
- Work effectively to prevent corruption and causes of conflicts and civil unrest.
- Focus on economic growth and sustainable development.
- Promote knowledge and righteousness.
- Promote social welfare and overall national progress.

One nation may govern or take responsibility over another as a state—especially in times of instability or need—but not to assert supremacy, dominate, or exploit the people or resources of that nation. Such a relationship should exist solely to help the governed nation in the above mentioned essential aspects. The ultimate aim should be the **well-being of all**, and the creation of a world that upholds **righteousness, justice, harmony, and compassion**—never a world of domination and division.

Chapter 9:

Case of My Nation (India)

Divisions among People in the Name of Caste:

We divided our own people in the name of caste—labeling some as superior and others as inferior. This created deep-rooted social injustice and shattered the harmony of our society. These divisions weakened us from within over time. We also shifted further towards polytheism, and later became fragmented in the name of sects.

Despite this, Adi Shankaracharya, in the 8th century CE, made a powerful effort to unite the various religious sects. His wisdom and vision helped restore a sense of unity among diverse spiritual paths, and he succeeded to a great extent, however it did not help eliminate or reform the caste system. Soon after his time, our nation was struck by wave after wave of invasions by external forces.

Invaded, Ruled and Manipulated by Foreign Powers:

Our nation suffered greatly under repeated invasions by rulers from the Middle East, Central Asia, and Afghanistan. These invaders looted our wealth, destroyed our places of worship, massacred millions of our people, and brought massive destruction to our land. Eventually, they captured our nation, turned it into part of their empire, and ruled over us for centuries.

But the damage wasn't just physical—it was psychological and cultural as well. They succeeded in convincing a large number of our own people to turn against each other through religious justification. They promoted the idea that our native language, traditions, and culture were inferior, and should be replaced. This deeply affected the collective mindset of our people and fractured the social fabric of our nation.

Even after their rule formally ended, some of their ideological agents remained—and some still do. These forces played a key role in the partitioning of our land, leading to the creation of Pakistan, and later, Bangladesh. Personally, I do not consider Pakistan and Bangladesh as separate nations. I see them as two separated states of one united nation—like two rooms of the same house, forcibly split apart by two stubborn brothers.

As the era of Middle Eastern, Central Asian and Afghan rule ended, the British took over. They exploited our land and people, drained our resources, and committed countless atrocities against the innocent. They too considered our people and culture inferior. Beyond economic and political control, they also spread their religion—Christianity—to some extent, but not as much as previous rules, and many among us were influenced or converted, adopting their religion and culture.

Division of Language: A Cultural Injustice

One of the most tragic yet overlooked aspects of our division was the systematic separation of language—an invisible but powerful tool of identity and unity.

Over centuries, foreign rulers successfully convinced many of our people to distance themselves from their own language. They created a mindset where using Indian-origin words, even for one's own **name**, was seen as something shameful or even sinful—*paap*, as we say in Hindi. Instead of taking pride in and enriching our native language, people began to replace it with Arabic and

Persian vocabulary. Not just words, even **Indian scripts were sidelined**, as if honoring the language of our own soil had become forbidden.

This linguistic manipulation didn't just divide vocabulary and scripts—it divided the **psyche** of an entire community. People began to associate language with religion, and thus, **language itself became a symbol of division**.

"I personally faced this when I decided to give my daughter a name in Hindi—the language of my nation. As expected, many so-called religious people laughed at me, and ridiculed me behind my back. I was even advised by religious scholars to change her name to an Arabic one, as if naming my child in my own language was a spiritual crime. Just reflect for a moment—how deeply the psychology of our people has been distorted.

But I stood my ground. I chose a Hindi name for my daughter, because language is not just a tool of communication—it is an expression of identity and pride of belonging to a nation."

Historically, what we call "Urdu" today was once referred to as **Hindi, Hindustani, Hindavi, and Rekhta**. During the Delhi Sultanate (1206–1526 CE), Persian was the language of administration, but the common people spoke what they called "Hindi." The famed poet Amir Khusrau used the term "Hindavi" while writing in the local language using the Persian script. This script, known as Naskh (Arabic) and later Nasta'liq (developed in Iran), was gradually adopted in the Indian subcontinent.

However, over time, this Hindavi language became increasingly infused with Persian, Arabic, and Turkish, especially in Mughal military and cultural settings. The term "**Urdu**"—from the Turkish word "*Ordu*", meaning "army" or "camp"—was first popularized in the 18th century, believed to be first used by poet **Ghulam Hamdani Mushafi**, referring to this Persianized form of Hindi spoken in Mughal camps.

Later, during British colonial rule in the 19th century, this divergence was politically cemented: **Hindi**, written in **Devanagari** and influenced by **Sanskrit**, and **Urdu**, written in **Perso-Arabic** script and influenced by **Persian and Arabic**, were officially declared two distinct languages.

Just as our land was split into **India and Pakistan**, so too was our language split into **Hindi and Urdu**—a division that never needed to happen.

What next?

I often wondered, *"How did we become so blind that others could divide us so easily—and we couldn't even realize it?"*

What kind of ignorance had taken over us that we allowed outsiders to manipulate our minds, distort our values, divide our families, culture and language—and we just accepted it, generation after generation, as if it was all natural?

How are we going to deal with this now? How do we even begin to rectify the damage that has been done?

Remember that we are a nation of people with different traditions and sects of religion.

Let me give you a simple example: If someone from outside convinces our family members to turn against each other, causing hatred and division within our own household, **should we stay silent, or hate our own family members, or should we try our best to bring them back together?**

The same applies to our nation.

A nation is not defined by religion, sect, or tradition, rather, it is defined by its people living together in shared dignity and mutual respect. We must understand that it is the belief in God and commitment to righteousness that truly matter to us—not the different rules, rituals and spiritual practices people follow.

Let people discover what's correct, better or beneficial for them—whether through the teachings of the Quran, the Bible, the Vedas, the Bhagavad Gita, or any other scripture. But let that be a journey of learning, not a reason for hatred or conflict. Let people choose their way to connect with God, to understand life, to follow righteousness—as long as it promotes peace, justice, and moral responsibility.

We may, and should, advise, guide, or invite others toward what we sincerely believe is correct, better or truthful—but always with respect, wisdom, and humility. We must understand: You cannot force someone to believe what you believe, or follow the same rituals and spiritual practices that you do. In the end, it is God who will judge—not we. He alone will decide whose beliefs were correct, whose rituals were acceptable, and who truly lived a life of truth and sincerity.

Every one of us needs to reflect and correct ourselves, whether we are religious scholars, intellectuals, or highly educated individuals. No one should ever assume they are perfect. We all have something to correct and improve, but we ignore it. I know this from experience—it took me years to re-evaluate my own thinking, and to begin changing myself.

Those who admit the possibility of human error, are the ones who have the potential to evolve. But those who think they are already perfect—they have shut the door to growth, correction and improvement.

Lastly, we must remember: never hate a person because of their culture or language. You may disagree with certain traditions, or point out what you think is harmful or incorrect practice, but that does not justify hatred. Cultural diversity is part of humanity. Hatred based on cultural or linguistic differences is a sign of ignorance—not wisdom.

It is time to rise with wisdom. Not by imposing beliefs, but by creating a society that values understanding over division, humility over ego, and unity over labels. Let us build a society that values correction over condemnation, dialogue over division, and mutual respect over superiority.

O People of My Nation!

If you choose not to understand this today—if you reject this call for unity, wisdom, and self-correction—then know that:

The coming generations will understand.

- They will ask the same questions.
- They will search for the truth.
- And eventually, they will rise to reclaim what we failed to protect—**our unity, our wisdom, our identity.**

Remember:

“That which is TRUE or LOGICAL will always prevail over that which is FALSE or ILLOGICAL.”

- No matter how long it takes, truth finds its way.
- No matter how deep the division, light breaks through.
- And no matter how far we've fallen, **a people rooted in HONESTY and WISDOM can always rise again.**

Chapter 10:

Closing

I sincerely apologize if any mistakes have been made in this book. I am committed to correcting them in the revised edition. We would be grateful to those who point out the mistakes in this book.

If anyone—including atheists—believes that any of my perspectives is incorrect (especially about Islam and Quran), I welcome thoughtful discussions. You are invited to share your opinions or objections in writing, provided they are supported by stronger logic and evidence. I am open to rethinking and revising my views if presented with compelling reasoning that surpasses my own.

However, I urge you to read this book carefully and reflect deeply before forming objections. Take time to truly understand the arguments presented.

If you feel something is missing, or if you have a counter-question, please do not assume that we lack a response, or we do not have answers to that. I assure you that we have answers to every sincere and thoughtful question. You are welcome to write to us at our email address.

Email Address: TheHonestAndWise@gmail.com

Website: TheHonestAndWise.org (coming soon)